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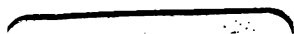


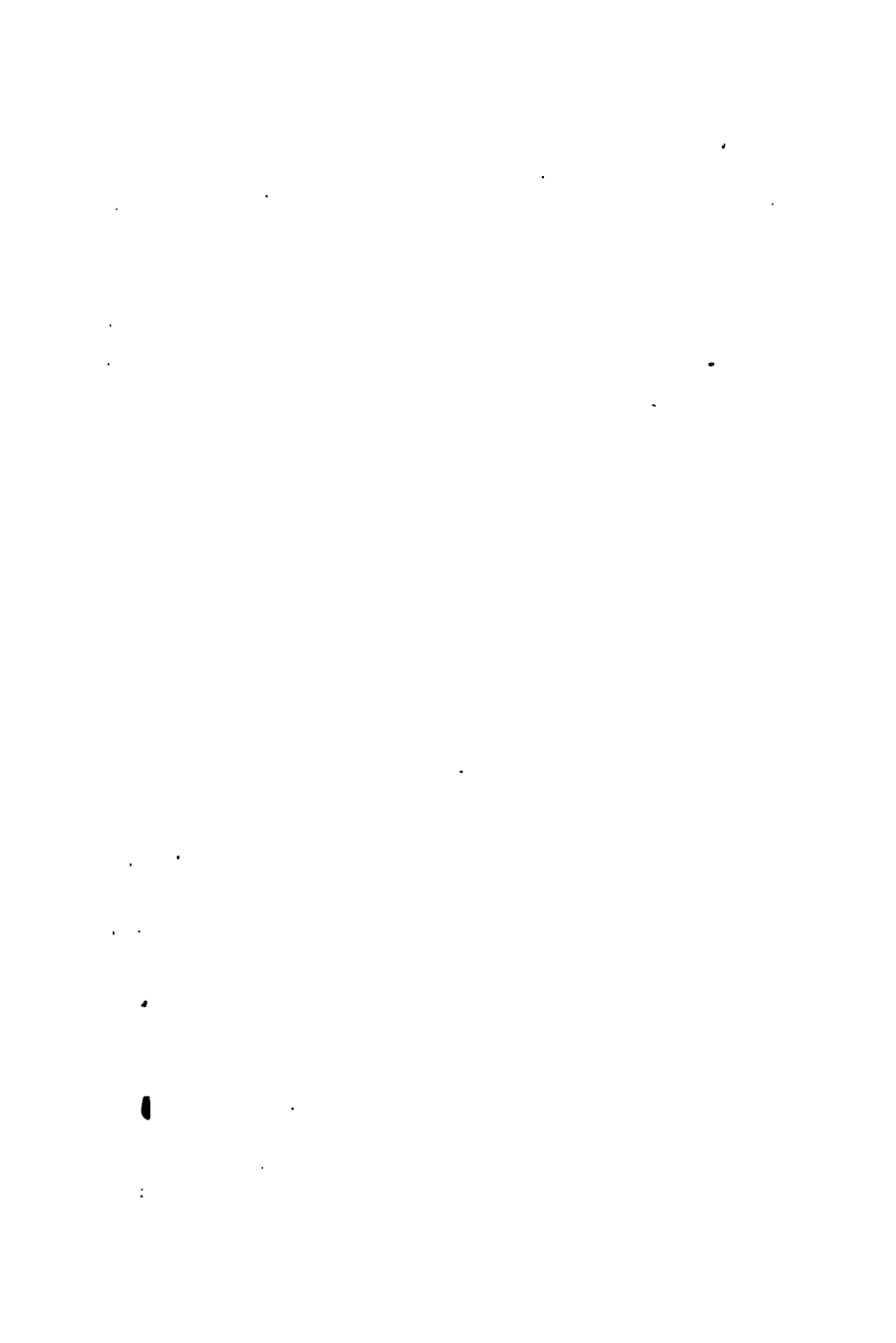
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THE RIVAL SISTERS,

IN SEVEN CANTOS.

THE RIVAL SISTERS;

WITH

OTHER POEMS.

E falso il dir che uccida
Se dura, un gran dolore,
E che, se non si muore
Sia facile a soffrir.
Questo ch'io provo e pena
Che avanza
Ogni costanza
Che il viver m' avvilena
Ma non mi fa morir.

METASTASIO.

LONDON;
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL.

1834.



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NOTE.

THE following Poems were written some years ago. Circumstances have delayed their publication until the present time.

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ERRATA.

- Page 3 line 15 *erase the semicolon after fame.*
9 — 21 *for not wished read nor wished.*
14 — 16, *for attempts, read attacks.*
99 — 5 *for tread read trod.*
112 — 16 *for vengeance read vengeance.*
120 — 18 *for steenly read sternly.*
121 — 23 *for bursts read burst.*

APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORSHIP.

*An Epistle to a Brother.**

MUCH have I mused on what was said by you,
When last we met, and feared to find it true ;—
“ ’Tis vain to hope, in these degenerate days,
A nameless bard can win the meed of praise ;
Vain even to think that aught can yet remain
To say or sing, except in hackneyed strain.
The very source of verse is running dry,
And nought but shallow draughts can now supply.
Nature herself is spent—her ample field
Rich mental harvests will no longer yield ;
Tired, she reclines, and her o’er-laboured soil
Scarce gives a scanty gleaning to our toil.”


* This was written before it was in contemplation to publish the present volume.

Such are your fears—nor singular, I grant,
For such is now the universal cant.
Oft has it weighed full heavy on my mind,
And yet methinks an answer we may find.

Ye who thus meanly think of Nature's powers,
Cast your eyes round, and mark this isle of ours;
A thousand years have seen your native earth
Pour forth her products, fearless of a dearth;
Ten thousand thousand mouths are daily fed,
And none have taxed her yet with lack of bread.
Still Spring puts forth the green and tender shoot,
Still Autumn fills our garners with her fruit;
And, trust me, mind and matter *even* stand—
Neither need fear a famine in the land.

How few materials form the face of man !
Nose, mouth, eyes, chin, the same since time began;
Yet when did e'er our wondering vision strike
Two faces that were perfectly alike ?
Through those few features does not Nature range,
Through every mode and modicum of change,
From ape-like ugliness, to forms that seem
Less of earth's mould than what of heaven's we
dream ?

In *mind's* immortal essence shall we trace
Less difference, then, than in the form or face ?



Mind, stamped with God's own image, and ordained
High to outsoar the dust to which 'tis chained—
When back to earth its earthly garb is flung,
To seek the Omniscient Source from whence it
 sprung,
And scan its countless works through endless time,
Vast as its theme, and as its source sublime.

Nor deem that in its prison-house of earth,
It bears few traces of its glorious birth,
Nor meanly seek to fetter it below,
Or say, even here, "No farther shalt thou go!"
Who dare to set a limit to the mind,
Degrade their Maker, and debase their kind.

The sum is this—in intellect or face,
A casual likeness we may sometimes trace;
At times a line, a thought, may coincide,
And yet the general difference be wide.
Though various are the roads which lead to fame,
Where thousands travel, some *must* take the same:
To his own steps let each attention pay,
And none need fear to jostle on the way.

If now acquitted on the charge of "*trite*,"
You yet should ask to what good *end* I write :

To *none*, I own, if glory or if gains
Alone can recompense poetic pains.
But does not then the soul-enraptured bard
Find in those very pains a rich reward ?
Need *you* be told, who angle, hunt, and shoot,
That half the pleasure lies in the pursuit ?
The game once bagged, I've seen you scarcely
care

Save for the boast, your burden home to bear.
'Tis not that wealth or honour I *despise*,
Who run the race *must* wish to win the prize.
But mean the mortal, who, because denied
The selfish ends of avarice or of pride,
Deserts the path by Nature pointed out,
Nor breathes but in the rabble's idle shout.
I play for *pleasure*, though I lose my stake,
And woo the Muses for their own sweet sake.

Pride sometimes whispers, " You could write as
well

As Mrs. H—m—s, or as L. E. L."

Praise, too — or *flattery*, if it *must* be so,—
Oft raises pride's thermometer when low.
But neither Pride nor Praise will print a book,
Nor get the public on its leaves to look.
Vainly ye soothe, sweet harbingers of fame !
Who ever bought — a bard without a *name* ?

A *name*!—aye, there's the rub — of *that* possess,
Give him but *that*, a *dunce* may do the rest!
Why cannot bards *that* legacy bequeath,
And leave their *name* when they resign their wreath?
Elijah-like, their mantle cast on earth,
And rise, in phoenix-fires, to second birth?
For lack of *that* (at least I'll fancy so)
In yonder desk my Muse lies buried low.
Year after year the luckless rhymes repose —
Oh, that their long long quarantine would close!
For though content to try a short probation,
I do not wish it to be quite *Horatian*! *

With leaves of laurel Cæsar bound his brows,
To hide advancing age's tell-tale snows; †
And still the plant o'er baldness loves to play,
Nor binds the temples till the locks are grey!

No partial kinsman penned reviews to puff,
Good, bad, or middling, *my* poetic stuff;
Nor have my Odes yet ventured to appear
In tender Keepsake, or soft Souvenir.

* Alluding to Horace's well-known advice to authors to keep their works nine years in their desks before they give them to the world.

† This has been assigned as the true origin of the wreath which has since become synonymous with glory.

Perhaps — in life neglected or unknown,
My *almost namesake's* lot may be my own :*
When I've been dust for thirty years or more,
Some critic may the mouldering leaves explore,
And having, then, no cause to hate or dread
“ Neglected genius, numbered with the dead !!! ”
May urge the *then* world to reverse my doom,
And idly heap its honors on my tomb.

But why, sweet Poesy ! should I complain
That wealth and glory come not in thy train ?
The wreath of fame — the purse of sordid pelf —
To others give ! — *my* treasure is *thyself* !
Shall I not own it, who, through many a day
Of silent grief, have felt, and blessed, thy
 sway ?

Who, from the earliest and most infant hour
That memory registers, have owned thy power ?
Friend of my youth ! still, still in riper years
My footsteps follow through this vale of tears !
With loftier themes, maturer thoughts inspire —
Warm frozen age with thy reviving fire ;

* ————— “ Collins — ill-starred name !
Whose lays' requital was, that tardy fame,
Who bound no laurel round his living head,
Should hang it o'er his monument when dead.”

Nor quit me then, but surer comfort shed
 Than erst on Adrian's, round my dying bed.*
 I would not wish to breathe beyond the hour
 When I shall cease to feel thy sacred power!

'Tis true that I have bowed at lucre's shrine,†
 Nor would "maturer thoughts" revoke the line.
 No! next to Heaven's best boon, delightful health,
 As joy's chief corner-stone I value wealth;
 But, blest with competence—just clothed and fed,
 I need not coin my brains for daily bread;
 And, for aught else that Fortune hath denied,
 I fear by Fame 'twill never be supplied.

Nor yet, alas! to make my Muse amends,
 Her day-dreams win the sanction of my friends.

* * * * *

Alas! good folks! let Nature take her course;
 You cannot turn the stream back to its source.
 Had fate, indeed, ordained that I should wed,
 And Hymen singed the laurel from my head,
 Why, then, my friends, I'd shown you what a *Blue*
 In such predicament could learn to do;

- * The Emperor Adrian's address to his departing spirit is well known, and has been beautifully imitated by Pope in his "Vital spark of heavenly flame."

† See Ode to Wealth.

And, taught by my example, you should see
The hand that wields a pen could turn a key.
Then had you seen me teach the soup to thicken,
And sign death-warrants for each hapless chicken ;
Big with important nothings, strut about
To please some sportsman spouse, or country lout ;
His dinner cook — and eke his stockings darn —
Of daintiest dishes — with enduring yarn !
And when at length he yielded to the fates,
And broke his neck in leaping five-barred gates,
With tender epitaph I'd grace his bier,
A pompous tomb — and (if I could) a tear !
All this, and more, I *would* do if required,
Meantime, permit me still — to be inspired.

“ But if the muse won't pay her board, why har-
bour her ? ” —

“ My mother had a maid called Barbara,”
Said Desdemona — and when sorrow wrung,
Nought could she say but what this maid had
sung :

As Shakespeare quotes a girl of low degree,
A like example may suffice for me.
My aunt, then, had a pretty maid called Bella,
Who fell in love with a most reckless fellow ;
Much did her mistress marvel when she heard
Of her strange fancy and her plighted word,

And as she liked the girl and wished her well,
She straight resolved to catechise poor Bell.

Of logic nought knew *she*, but much of love,
Both which assertions I proceed to prove.

Thus quoth the dame: "I hear you mean to marry;
Methinks 'twere more discreet awhile to tarry."
The damsel blushed, and bashful hung her head —
"I cannot help it," that was all she said!
"The man's a spendthrift, and a sot beside;
Think what a dismal doom awaits his bride;
Besides, you silly girl, you are too young" —
"I cannot help it!" trembled on her tongue.
"Well! we shall see the end of such a marriage,—
He'll break your heart—or bring you to the
parish."

Poor Bell turned pale—a tear was in her eye,
But still, "I cannot help it," was her cry.
"Why, girl, you must be mad!" the mistress
cried,
"I cannot, cannot help it!" she replied,

Now put the Muse for *him*, the maid for *me*,
And 'tis precisely *my* case that you see.
So, if I scribble to no earthly use,
"I cannot help it!" must be *my* excuse.

Unasked — unsought — to me the Muses came ;
I wished to bask in, not imbibe the flame.
And though I bowed where'er their footsteps be,
Nor dreamed nor hoped they would descend
to me.

Not Horace could the *medium* more detest —
“ *Non homines non Di,* ” — you know the rest.
Could *I* then dream of glory or of gain,
Who even that medium hoped not to attain ?
And thus, if taxed with verse, though ev'n in joke,
I blushed as if the decalogue I'd broke.
Those days of bashfulness have long been past,
For struggling nature triumphed at the last ;
And having crossed the Rubicon of rhyme,
I'll e'en go on — and trust the rest to time.

Not less *that* river seeks its parent sea,
Which, hid by shades, glides calmly o'er the lea,
Than that which rushing from th' impending rock,
Stuns the wide earth which startles to the shock.
Nor less, if worthy found, *my* future name
Might swell the ocean of eternal fame,
Than those now hailed by loud-applauding lands,
And taught by Fame to flow o'er *golden* sands.

These may be dreams — but not to me a dream
The real bliss of basking in thy beam

Sun of the soul ! whose intellectual ray
Cheers the dark thought, as Phœbus cheers the day.
Forsake me not, sweet Poesy ! since I
From all my cares to thee for refuge fly :
Still, still to thee my heart of hearts I'll give,
Nor cease to love thee though I cease to live ;
Since not to earth alone thy strains belong,
But Heaven itself is one celestial song !

•

• •

•

CANTO I.

THE BOWER.

Island of bliss ! amid the subject seas
That thunder round thy rocky coast set up
At once the wonder, terror, and delight
Of distant nations !

THOMSON.

Not of the skies where scorching suns are glowing
Not of the Beauties darkening in their beams ;
But of the cloudier atmosphere, bestowing
Tints pure and lovely as a poet's dreams :

Not of the climes where flowers for ever springing
Fatigue with bright monotony of bliss ;
But where cool dews and fickle gales are flinging
The varied verdure that enchants in this :

Not of past deeds, and days of old renown,
Redeemed by History's touch from time's neglect,
But of the mightier acts that grace our own,
Which ev'n the prime of youth can recollect :

'Tis mine to sing ! — no muse's aid I ask —
For me they scorn to quit the Aonian hill ;
Nor will I woo them to the aspiring task
That owns a loftier inspiration still.

Nature, 'tis thine ! no fancied scenes I draw —
No fabled woes resound along my lyre ;—
Do thou then teach the deepening tints to awe,
Do thou the mournful minstrelsy inspire !

Though sterner critics turn, perchance, away,
My song may win the listening ear of youth —
The smile of beauty may reward the lay,
And pity's tear embalm a tale of truth !

LAND of my birth ! the bravest, noblest, best
Rest, crowned with glory, from thy labors rest.
Thou canst not win one single laurel more
To add to Waterloo's ensanguined store.
Years have rolled on, yet memory still is rife
With all the wonders of that matchless strife ;

When conquest crowned thee for her own — and
fame

Became synonymous with Wellesley's name.


Long years have rolled away — and other themes
Have waked the warrior's fire, the poet's dreams,
Yet ne'er should civil strife or party rage
Blot former benefits from memory's page.

Illustrious conqueror ! exalted chief !
Pure was the praise unmixed with shame or grief.
Untarnished by ambition, and unstained
By cruelty, the wreaths thy valour gained.
That arm which ransomed nations — raised thine own
To heights of fame undreamed of, and unknown —
Broke slavery's galling yoke through many a land —
And dashed the sceptre from the tyrant's hand —
At freedom's glorious call, and not for fame ;
Waved round our Eden's walls its sword of flame ;
Then well may Freedom's sea-girt island raise
To thee the ceaseless tribute of her praise.
No lapse of time, how long soe'er it be
Should break her bonds of gratitude to thee !
But cease, too daring bard, and turn thy flight
From themes too lofty, and from scenes too bright ;
The bird of Jove may wing his towering way
And gaze undazzled on the orb of day ;

But flies the plaintive Philomel his light
To soothe the sober ear of pensive night ;
And in low dirge-like tones the murmuring dove
Breathes the soft notes of sorrow and of love.

Then pardon, warrior, if a muse like mine
Invokes thy name to consecrate her line.
Thee history's nobler page shall give to fame
And loftier bards shall celebrate thy name.
Far different themes, unnoticed and unknown,
Invite a lyre that thrills to grief alone.
The deeds of heroes, and the din of arms,
And fame's loud clarion, have for me no charms ;
Me, called a wilder warfare to relate —
The war of passions, and the frowns of fate ;
Not the quick death the warrior dies well pleased,
But the slow torments of a soul diseased ;
Not wounds which skill can cure, of fire or steel,
But wounds that pierce the heart, and never heal !

Past was the war — that war of one short day,
The sounds of death itself had died away.
Yes, all was past ! and dearly-purchased peace
Had sheathed the sword, and bade the carnage cease ;
The flower of France's fame, and Britain's pride,
Foes now no more, sleep tranquil side by side ;
Yet high the glorious meed which *they* could claim
Who left their lives upon that field of fame ;



And high the meed that waited *their* return
Who yet survived it by a fate less stern ;
Gave not their own, for fame's immortal, breath,
But plucked the palm, nor paid the price of death.
Yet some there be of that surviving train
Have waged a sterner war with time and pain,
And struggling with the weight of many woes
Have envied since their comrades' calm repose.

Of these was Desmond — handsome, noble, young,
Of generous race and lofty lineage sprung.
Oh ! idle praise, for him whose higher aim
Was not to borrow but to *merit* fame —
Nor, for his glory, and his country's good
Grudged he the price he paid for it — his blood.
There, in the *medal* glittering on his breast,
Behold his arms, his motto, and his crest ;
Worlds should not bribe it, though by peasants
shared,
Crowns sink to baubles, with that coin compared. ³


And England hailed her sons from battle-strife,
And blessed them for her honor and her life ;
Yet wept she too, — ah ! when, in world like this,
Unmixed with anguish, flowed the tide of bliss ?
She weaved the laurel for the living head
But dewed its leaves with pity for the dead.

Pity ! erase, erase the' inglorious name —
'Tis *admiration* decks the urn of fame.
'Tis homage — reverence — awe — 'tis all that man
Pays to lost worth — then grieves 'tis all he can !

And Desmond shared the nobly earned applause
Which valour well might claim in such a cause ;
His the loud meed of haughty manhood's praise —
His the soft silent tribute beauty pays ;
For still defenceless beauty, valour charms,
Still Venus smiles upon the god of arms.
How proud was she, with *him* who led the dance !
How bounded every breast at Desmond's glance.
While many a fair one breathed the secret sigh
That *she* might seem the fairest in his eye,
That to her single share at length might fall
The homage rendered hitherto to all.

But long to that fair train of lovely foes
Did he the shield of apathy oppose,
Of all those Beauties, though admired as such,
But two had charms for him — 'twas one too much !

Yet if awhile he wavered in his choice,
His doubts but echoed back the general voice,
Which knew not, gazing on that sister pair,
Which to deem fairest, they were both so fair.



Julia, the eldest, had a form and face
Such as the pencil loves, yet fails, to trace.
Blue laughing eyes, so brilliantly clear,
You'd sigh to think, such e'er should shed a tear ;
Lips whose live red transcends the ruby's hue,
Or tint of opening rosebuds dipt in dew ;
Locks of light gold that down her forehead flow,
Like yellow moonbeams gilding mountain snow,
Alternate, when they wave along her neck,
Veil and reveal the beauties which they deck,
Or, trained to order by her handmaid's art,
Bind in each braid the charm'd beholder's heart.

Her soul seemed worthy of a shrine so fair,
Who gazed on this beheld the other there.
Yes! *then* at least warm, ardent and sincere,
Her heart was feeling's throne, and friendship's sphere;
On all around, its rays of kindness shone,
But its best feelings were reserved for one ;
For one dear maid 'twas her delight to blend
The sacred names of sister and of friend,
And, linked alike by nature and by choice,
Bid duty echo inclination's voice.

But not by her alone was Laura loved —
All eyes admired her, and all hearts approved ;

And if united loveliness and worth
Can fix esteem, or call affection forth,
She was indeed endowed with every charm
To win the careless, and the cold to warm.

O'er her dark liquid eye of deepest blue
The silken lash a sleepy softness threw :
On that mild eye all others loved to gaze,
E'en when the downcast lid concealed its rays ;
Ev'n then, through that transparent medium, shone
A charm peculiar to itself alone ;
A charm that taught the sternest heart to melt,
A charm — formed, not to be *described* but *felt*.
From heaven's own tint its azure though it drew,
Th' expression seemed yet heavenlier than the hue ;
How more than lovely would it oft appear
When bright with pleasure's smile or pity's tear.
Such smiles a radiant Angel might bestow,
Who looks from heaven above, on saints below ;
And tears like hers from heavenly eyes might steal
Could spirits weep, for woes they cannot feel.

Such were the sisters — and though thus unlike,
At times a faint resemblance still would strike ;
When aught occurred to render Laura gay,
Julia's arch smile around her lips would play —

When pain or pity Julia's mirth subdued
She looked like Laura in her pensive mood.

Both felt for Desmond all that friendship feels,
And both, too quickly, all that love conceals.
But Laura hid the passion in her breast ;
Whate'er she felt, her feelings she repress.
While Julia sought (more for the triumph's sake,
Than conscious of her happiness at stake)
By many a female wile and winning art —
The envied conquest of the hero's heart.
And each, by Desmond's wavering doubts deceived,
Herself the object of his choice believed.

Unknown to each, he yet was dear to both ;
But oh ! how different was their passion's growth ;
Julia's a light and fickle flame, that played
Around a heart it could not all pervade —
Laura's that lasting love so rarely known,
Which once imbibed, can end with life alone.

And Desmond saw — or thought he saw — at length,
Her mild attachment's far superior strength :
Not wished it less than thought — for now his own
No longer doubtful, fixed on her alone.
If Julia's dazzling charms had fired at first
A deeper flame the gentle Laura's nursed,

And soon, her sway confirmed beyond controul,
She reign'd confest the sovereign of his soul.

From cities far removed, their sire's domain
Formed the rich centre of a rural plain.
Within the spacious garden's blooming bounds,
The brightest spot of those enchanted grounds,
There was an arbour, by their mother reared
In youth — for her sake to their hearts endeared ;
And since the fairest of her sex and first
In Eden's fragrant shade her flowerets nursed,
No fairer hands e'er dressed a lovelier bower,
Nor lighter hearts reposed at noontide hour.

And brightly blooming round that fairy grot,
The circling scene seemed worthy of the spot.
Here the wild woodbine scents the summer air,
The rich seringa sheds its odours there.
Here drinks the luscious grape ensanguined dyes
Nor asks the solace of more southern skies ;
The pensive willow weeps above the wave,
As Beauty bends o'er Love's untimely grave ;
And trees of taller growth and statelier mien
Rise o'er the rest, and form a verdant screen.
Beneath, a river winds its murmuring way,
Soft on whose breast the summer breezes play ;


And Plenty laughs along the lovely scene,
In fields of waving gold, or glowing green.
While, far beyond, the distant ocean's roar
Dies, faintly heard, along a rocky shore ;
So far, the eye but faintly can define
The distant limits of the wat'ry line ;
Distinguished solely from the circling sky
By the deep azure of its darker dye.

Such was the lovely scene the Sisters chose
For social converse, or for sweet repose ;
And this the spot, his secret to impart,
Where Desmond sought the sovereign of his heart,
Alone he found her — wrapt so deep in thought,
No sound of coming steps her ear had caught.
An open volume on her knee was spread,
On which she gazed, but not as if she read ;
Her vagrant thoughts were wandering far from thence,
She saw the words, but not perceived the sense.
Is it a tear that trembles on the page ?
What can thus deeply interest or engage ?
Slowly at length her downcast eyes she raised,
And, starting, blushed, to find that Desmond gazed.
“ Say lovely Laura, may I ask, unblamed,
What is the happy volume ?” he exclaimed,
“ That draws those drops of pity from thine eye,
For which, in vain, despairing suitors sigh ?”

Then half in pensive, half with sportive, air,
He smiling took the volume — “ The Corsair !”
“ Is it for fabled woes that Laura weeps,
While for more real griefs her pity sleeps ?”

“ Desmond ! ’tis not the tale has power to draw,
Sad though it be, the sympathy you saw.
It was th’ unhappy bard I thought of then,
Whose deeds but mocked the precepts of his pen.
Oh ! Bard sublime ! from whose resounding lyre
Flow strains which listening seraphs might admire,
Are they all sound ? and is this heavenly strain
Not of thy heart the offspring, but thy brain ?
He who could draw a picture such as this
Of faith connubial, and connubial bliss—
Of love that triumphed o’er the lapse of time —
Of constancy that half atoned for crime : —
Forgive me, Desmond, since no lover you,
When he was false, ah ! who can e’er be true ?”

“ Are these thy thoughts ? oh ! deem not thus of all :
From lips so mild can such harsh censure fall ?
Not yet so far debased is human kind,
That worth and truth can fail the heart to bind.
Yes, lovely sceptic, hear me at thy feet,
Relenting hear, the promise I repeat :



What fair Medora was, be thou to me,
And more than Conrad shall thy Desmond be —
O ! I will prove the substance of that shade,
The model of the picture there pourtrayed."

"Twas with a trembling joy that Laura heard
The fond petition which his lips preferred ;
Then sighing said, and yet a pensive smile
Played on her lip and blushing cheek the while,
" These are thy words, and well do I believe
No words of thine would willingly deceive ;
Yet oh ! forgive me, if I half suspect
That ardent love may end in cold neglect,
And he who like the Corsair woos to day,
E'en like the Bard, to-morrow may betray."

" What do I hear ?" exclaimed th' indignant youth.
" Does then the lovely Laura doubt my truth ?
And will not faith such idle fears absorb ?
Then listen to my vow — when yon bright orb,
That rolls in summer grandeur o'er our heads,
And from his burning disk the daybeam sheds,
In noontide majesty, shall check his march,
And yield to night's domain the azure arch —
Or, when he sinks, slow fading, in the west,
Forget to rise, all radiant from his rest ; —

When yon dark pile of ever-during rock
Shall cease to battle with the billowy shock ; —
When these things are—if things like these can be —
Then Desmond's heart shall cease to beat for thee !”

“ Such is the rant of lovers,” she replied,
And strove to smile — yet did not smile, but sighed ;
Then, while a sudden glow her cheek illumed,
She raised her dove-like eyes, and thus resumed —
“ Liken not Man — the insect of a day —
The sport of time and chance — the reptile's prey —
To yon unchanging orb that dwells alone,
And looks on passing ages from his throne —
But to the light cloud floating o'er his face,
That melts in empty air, and leaves no trace ; —
Not to the rock, that rears its head sublime,
And mocks the vain attempts of mouldering time ;
But to the wave that breaks upon the shore,
A moment murmurs, and is heard no more.”

“ Alas ! 'tis true, sweet moralist,” he said,
“ On all below is imperfection shed ;
Yet if by something changeless I must swear —
Perfection's self, and as perfection rare,
Then by thyself, fair creature, I will vow ;
For what so perfect in mine eyes as thou ?”

“ Nay, vow no more — be ever as thou art,
And with the hand I give thee, take — my heart !”
Soft to his lips that snowy hand he pressed,
And clasped the lovely donor to his breast.

There is a moment in the life of man
(Match it all other moments, if ye can !)
When his sad heart, in care so oft immersed,
Its pangs remitted, and its doom reversed,
Forgets “ the hard condition of its birth”
And beats to rapture, though it beats on earth ;
’Tis when that throbbing heart, which long has owned
Some worshipped idol on its altar throned,
Fled all its fears, and each fond doubt removed,
First owns its love, first feels itself beloved ;
This is that moment in the life of man,
Felt only once — it is but once it can !

For those that die in youth, the grief is deep,
As life had bliss beyond that peaceful sleep,
But deeper, keener, still, for those that die
When fortune’s favoring cup is brimming high ;
His doom the wiser ancients deemed the best
Who in the arms of rapture sunk to rest ;
And thus, blest pair, should *ye* have ceased to live,
When the wide earth had nothing left to give.

And such events have been — such erst the doom
That gave the rustic lovers to the tomb, ⁴
When the red angry lightning, glancing near,
Absorbed all other sentiments in fear.
All save that lasting love, whose quenchless flame
Nor death can daunt, nor selfish terror tame ;
They, while their comrades fled in wild alarms,
Sought the sole refuge wished — each other's arms ;
By that fond deed each dearer life to save,
Or seek and share, the shelter of the grave !
Nor coldly deem the daring action rash,
Or aught but mercy in the death-fraught flash,
When Fate, in favor to a love like theirs —
Fate, that fell power who heeds not human prayers,
To leave one sad survivor kindly loth,
Took pity upon each — and blasted both ! ⁵

END OF CANTO I.

CANTO II.

THE BROKEN VOW.

For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
 Our fancies are more giddy and infirm
 More longing, wav'ring, sooner lost and won,
 Than women's are.

SHAKESPEARE.

THERE is a strange perversity in man —
 That child of change— that creature of a span—
 Which bids him slight the bliss already gained,
 And sigh for others, not to be attained.
 While Desmond deemed his Laura's heart denied,
 'Twas her alone he sought—for her he sighed.
 That heart once gained, his own grew careless soon;
 First undervalued, then despised, the boon.
 Yet slow these changes, and progressive all—
 Not fiends themselves can in a moment fall.

Events occurred their union to delay ;
On time's swift wing a twelvemonth passed away ; —
And still young Laura's faithful bosom nursed
A flame as warm as it had felt at first..
But oh ! what change of purpose and of thought
That one short year in Desmond's feelings wrought !
'Twas Julia's mirth alone could now inspire,
And Laura's pensive softness seemed to tire.
Too soon, by gradual steps, the lovely prize,
So fondly sought, grew worthless in his eyes.
Could this be Desmond — generous, noble, brave ?
Thus can a single fault the soul enslave !
Thus can one error — a caprice, — a whim, —
The lustre of a thousand virtues dim !

Of all defects with which frail man is curst,
How oft a want of firmness proves the worst !
Hath it not ever been, from earliest times,
The fruitful source of follies and of crimes ?
Vice may reform — but Indecision, still,
Wav'ring from right to wrong, from good to ill,
Tost by each changing breath of passion's gales,
The dupe of every idiot that assails —
Is hopeless of amendment ; — trust it not !
Its vows are air, breathed, but to be forgot.
Let love and friendship rear no altar there —
Who sow on such a soil shall reap despair !

Ah ! rather seek to build upon the wave,
Than trust, one hour, to Indecision's slave !

And now when all was bright, a change would seem
In Desmond's look, when Laura was the theme.
And Julia wondering asked, with anxious fear,
“ Why thus estranged ?—is Laura's name less dear ?”
Then burst, at length, the wild confession forth—
He praised *her* matchless charms—*her* peerless worth :
“ Oh ! pardon (he exclaimed) that erring choice,
And deign to listen to a lover's voice.
Yes, hear me now the fatal words revoke,
False to my heart, that first my rash lips spoke ;
If all too late, I struggle to recede,
Then blame thine own attractions for the deed :”
But why repeat his ravings ? why retrace
Words which the lips that uttered them disgrace ?
And what did Julia answer ? did surprise,
And anger, flash from her averted eyes ?
They did :—but even while she spurned his prayer,
There was a troubled pleasure in her air ;
A something of regret, that left him scope
To cherish secret, though forbidden, hope.
Oh ! ye who unbelieving hear the tale,
Whose own pure hearts despise a heart so frail,
How will ye turn, indignant, from the prayer,
And heap opprobrium on the treacherous pair !

And yet, perchance, ye rather will exclaim,
“ ’Tis not the lovers but the bard, we blame.
False is the tale, if false it can pourtray
A sister and a suitor such as they !
Thus could they act, the maiden and the youth ?
It is not nature this, nor can be truth.”
’Tis strange I own, but oft less wond’rous far,
Events that *might be*, than events that *are*.
And things occur in real life that seem,
Too forced or fancied for the poet’s dream. —


’Twas night ; — and slumber’s balmy power had shed
Its soothing poppies on her sister’s head :
Julia went forth, and sought her favourite bower,
To court the freshness of the cooling hour,
And woo the balmy breath of opening spring,
Its healing influence o’er her heart to fling.
Not e’en to that frail heart would she confess
That Desmond was the cause of its distress :
His bold avowal sunk him in her eyes,
And rarely do we love what we despise ;
And yet, too surely, had she sought with care,
She would have found his image lingering there.

But now a ruder gale began to rise,
And sleep sat heavy on her wearied eyes.

Back she returned — but ere she yet withdrew
To seek repose, a letter caught her view.
Hold ! the first glance forbids to break the seal —
'Tis Desmond's writing — Desmond's last appeal.
That thought, that sight, at once revived her ire ;
She flung it on the half expiring fire,
And turned, indignant, in her strength of soul,
From the false contents of the perjured scroll.
Yes ! she must bend her thoughts to other themes,
And banish Desmond, even from her dreams.
Yet guided or by chance, or by caprice,
(Oh ! fatal moment for her future peace !)
On the last remnant of th' expiring flame,
Whose feeble flickerings scarce deserved the name ;
Ere yet she wooed soft sleep's benignant sway,
One glance she cast — there still the letter lay,
And, by the dying embers unillumed,
Was parched and shrivelled, but not yet consumed.
It was a feeling vague and undefined,
That flashed, that fatal moment, o'er her mind ;
A lingering wish, so wisely checked at first,
The lines to rescue, and the seal to burst.
Temptation hearkened to, soon gathers strength,
And Julia's better judgment slept at length ;
With cautious hand she drew the letter thence,
And coned with curious eye its specious sense.

“ Well may'st thou wonder, Julia, to behold
These lines—despair can make e'en cowards bold.
I write not to renew my hopeless suit—
Julia forbids, and Desmond shall be mute :
I do but claim the culprit's common right—
A hearing, ere thy heart condemn me quite ;
Nor lacks a fitting time to hear me speak,
Ere drags its weary length another week ;
Before that age to doubt and absence ends,
Meet at thy father's hall assembled friends ;
A bidden guest—oh ! how can I forbear
To join the throng when Julia will be there ? \
Yet, how presume to meet that angry eye,
Beneath whose smiles I live, whose frowns I die ?
How bear to change, for friendship's cordial glance,
The brow averted, and the look askance ;
Hate to incur, where love I dared to woo,
And feel, alas ! that I deserve it too ?

“ Julia, you scorn, reject me, and despise—
I feel that I am hateful in your eyes ;
Yet oh ! dear maid, though deeply I have erred,
Pause yet awhile—condemn me not unheard.
Yes, hear me paint the anguish which I feel,
Till o'er thy yielding breast compassion steal :
I own my fault—not even thou canst blame
More than myself my most unhappy flame ;



I mourn my error — but 'tis all too late ;
Fate urged me on, and who can conquer Fate ?
Julia" — the rest was blackened and effaced,
But all too much already she had traced.
She sat with fixed eyes gazing on the fire,
Nor marked its embers, spark by spark, expire.
'Tis night's last hour ! — she started at the sound,
And with an ominous shivering gazed around.
How sternly eloquent that deep-toned chime,
When heard in such a mood, at such a time !
She closed the letter — wherefore does she sigh ?
Why does the tear-drop tremble in her eye ?
Is it for fallen Desmond that she weeps ?
That o'er her frame that fearful shivering creeps ?
Or for her sister does the tear-drop flow,
Who sleeps, unconscious of impending woe ?
Weep for thyself, unhappy maid, not them !
'Tis not for thee to pity, or condemn ; —
Thee, doomed the guilt — the grief — of each to share,
And link *his* perfidy with *her* despair !
Oh ! haste thee then those specious lines to close,
And stay the sigh that heaves, the tear that flows ;
Alas ! so deep a sigh, so warm a tear,
Bespeak the writer, even now, too dear.

She rose — and gazing on her sister's face,
Sought, in her dreams, her waking thoughts to trace :

No sign of troubled visions there was shown,
No marks of mental anguish like her own ;
O'er her fair brow, unsullied feelings shed
A sleep as calm as that which lulls the dead ;
That deep mild air of angel-like repose,
Which innocence round slumbering beauty throws.
" Oh ! what a contrast !" Julia inly cried,
And from her soul's most deep recesses sighed.
" With what sweet nights her guiltless days are
crowned,
How calm her dreams, her slumber how profound !
This is no breast that bleeds with inward woes —
This is not grief's — this is not love's repose ;
For love is ever wakeful, soon alarmed,
By no fond hopes, to false confiding, charmed ;
Yet sees she not that Desmond is estranged,
Nor marks his absent mien, his manner changed ;
And if indeed she loved him, could it be ?
No ! no ! she loves him not — or not like me.
Like me ! and can I, dare I, love him then ?
Oh ! weakest I of women, he of men !
What ! can I cherish, in my hidden heart,
One treacherous hope where Desmond has a part ?
Beats that blind heart for one so prone to range,
That, free to choose, he chooses but to change ?
Rather by me be every thought employed,
That change to hide — this meeting to avoid.

Avoid ! but how ? an answer he demands,
And that, at least, he merits at my hands.
Well—I will meet him—yes, I will restore
These perjured lines—then never see him more ;
Or see him only as my sister's lord,
To peace, to honour,—and to thee restored.”
She pressed her soft lip with a sister's kiss —
“ Laura ! I seal the sacred vow with this !”
Roused by the touch, the wond'ring sleeper rose,
“ And what (she cried) detains thee from repose ?
Oh heaven ! a tear-drop trembling in thine eye !
Does Julia weep ? and knows not Laura why ?
Come to this faithful breast—a heart is there
That pants, whate'er thy grief, that grief to share ;
Thus let me, oh my love ! be pressed to thine,
And either chase thy tears, or mingle mine !”

There is a mood of mind we sometimes prove,
In which one tender word from those we love
Will strike some secret chord of mental pain,
That long had struggled for relief, in vain ;
And melt the frozen tide of feeling's stream,
As ice dissolves beneath the noon-day beam.
And thus—her confidence so kindly sought
By one whom she had wronged, though but in thought—
Flashed o'er her soul a pang of keen remorse,
That stirred her feelings from their inmost source,

And wakening all the love that late had slept,
She sunk into her Laura's arms, and wept.

She, while her sister sobbed upon her neck,
Strove not with fruitless care her tears to check,
Nor, with one idle question *whence* they flowed,
Chilled the soft charm her sympathy bestowed.
It was enough for *her* her sister grieved,
Enough, *that* grief her sympathy relieved ;
But when the woes that late so wildly gushed
In silent calmness of despair, seemed hushed,
With all the fondness of a sister's fears,
She sought the cause of those mysterious tears.

Fresh tears—fond thanks—but no reply she gained ;
They were too soon—too fatally—explained !

END OF CANTO II.

CANTO III.

THE BANQUET.

Not poppy nor mandragora,
 Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
 Shall ever med'cine thee to that sweet sleep
 Thou owed'st yesterday ! —————

Injurious Hermia ! most ungrateful maid !
 Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
 The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
 When we have chid the hasty-footed time
 For parting us — Oh ! and is all forgot ?

SHAKESPEARE.

HAST thou e'er felt, in life's first flowery stage,
 Ere hope was checked by care, or chilled by age,
 A sense of secret joy, and sudden mirth,
 That from no outward cause derived its birth,
 But sprang spontaneous in thy bounding breast,
 And bade thee feel *to be*, was to be *blest* —

Felt thy full bosom heave, unconscious why,
And tears of causeless transport dim thine eye :
Till, rapt in dreams of undefined delight,
All earth became Elysium in thy sight ?
Then tremble ! for the hour is near at hand,
That shows thee all thy hopes are built on sand,
That low in dust thy lofty dreams shall lay,
And rend the anchor of thy trust away.
Strange, that when Fate most deeply would destroy,
She leads her victim to the heights of joy ;
Strange, that when most her threatening aspect lowers,
She crowns her destined sacrifice with flowers ;
Lures him through rosy paths to Rapture's steep,
Then hurls him downward to the yawning deep !

With heart thus light—with hopes thus soon destroyed,
The rising morn saw Laura's thoughts employed ;
“ And whence,” she musing cried, “ this wond'rous
change,

That even to myself appears so strange ?
Why to my eyes do tears of transport steal ?
Whence springs the bright presentiment I feel ?
What doubts did yesterday my soul oppress !
Julia was sad, and Desmond loved me less.
Oh ! cold of heart, insensible, and blind,
To deem that Desmond could be aught but kind.

.

For thee dear Julia — if a sister's love
Can aught avail thine anguish to remove,
Soon shall my anxious fondness bid it flee,
And double all my bliss, in blessing thee !

While Laura thus indulged vain dreams of joy,
Far other themes her sister's thoughts employ :
The evening of the banquet came at length,
And called, to meet it, all her mental strength.
For Desmond came — her pardon to implore,
But, *that* obtained, came too, to sue for more —
To tell of lasting anguish — hopeless love —
Hers, as she willed, t' inflict or to remove.

And Julia listened till her anger slept,
And, vainly struggling to be calm, she wept !
He seized her hand, which shuddering she withdrew,
And hid, with both, her blushing face from view.
“ Desmond ! this hand — 'tis not for thee to touch ;
And these betraying tears have owned too much.
Go to my sister — hide whate'er hath passed,
Nor let one cloud her sunshine overcast ;
There offer passion's choice at reason's shrine,
And ask at Laura's lips a love like mine !”

While thus the maid pronounced the hero's doom,
With hasty steps he paced the echoing room ;

And when she ceased to speak, he stopped and turned,
With lip that quivered, and with brow that burned :

“ No, Julia, never ! — long I strove in vain —
From henceforth I will never strive again.
Oh ! if you be the angel that you seem,
In pity spare me on that fatal theme.
I will not offer at so pure a shrine
A heart no longer hers, no longer mine.
And dost thou think I could indeed conceal
All that this aching breast must hourly feel,
Ev’n if its empty vows again were brought
To sue — not where they *would*, but where they
ought ?

Urge me not then — for hers, for virtue’s sake —
On such a hopeless base her bliss to stake ;
Nor add to all the errors of my life,
A passion for the sister of my wife.
That I have loved another I lament, —
That I love *thee*, I never can repent.
Hear then, my fixed, my firm, my last resolve,
And, ere thy lips reply to it, revolve !
If scorned by thee — despairing I submit,
But, quitting thee, thy sister too I quit.
Julia, or none, must now be Desmond’s bride —
And this, this hour, my destiny decide !”

What then were Julia's thoughts ? ah ! who can tell
What mixed emotions in her bosom swell ?
As, in long train before her mental eyes,
The past, the present, and the future rise ?
Scenes of remorse, of agony, of doubt,—
Of bliss with Desmond, of despair without :
Bliss, which upbraiding conscience inly gnaws,—
Or sorrow soothed by lasting self-applause.

Ah ! pause, unhappy girl, while yet in time,
Though e'en to hesitate be here a crime ;
Ere thine own heart thou fatally deceive,
Pause at a step thou never canst retrieve !

She paused — but not for Reason to regain
Her tottering empire, and resume the rein,
But to drag Reason's self, a shackled slave,
At Passion's chariot-wheels o'er Duty's grave !

“ Oh Laura ! first dear sharer of my heart,
What anguish now to thine must I impart !
How can I act,” she inwardly exclaimed,
“ Or by my conscience, or by thee, unblamed ?
Heaven is my witness, if I could restore
To thee the heart that owned thy sway before ;
Not love alone, but life, I would resign,
To fix that wavering heart for ever thine.

But this can never be—then why should I
My certain bliss, for doubtful duty, fly ?
Or say that such resolve should give her pain, —
By my refusal what would Laura gain ?
Since, not the love a faithless heart transfers,
(Howe'er unjustly) can again be hers.
If, then, our anguish can give no relief,
And sharing, will not mitigate, her grief,
Though *she*, alas ! must sorrow, why should we ?
Where only one need suffer, wherefore three ?—
Ah ! well I know, would *she* these thoughts revolve,—
That Laura's self would sanction my resolve."

Loath to deny, and yet to yield afraid,
Thus argued she ;— alas ! deluded maid,
Round thee the heart—thrice dangerous sophist !—wove
In reason's guise, the subtle snares of love.

And Desmond marked the tumult of her breast,
And urged his suit—intreated—flattered—pressed :
She answered not—but well can silence show
All that the warmest lover longs to know.
Nor ceased he, till her lips all,— all revealed,
And with her promised hand his pardon sealed !

Elate with joy and hope, he thence withdrew—
But oh ! just heaven ! what vision meets his view ?

Whom battle shook not, is he now unmanned ?
At what ? a woman's smile ? her proffered hand ?
It is no spectre bids his eye grow dim —
'Tis she whom once he loved — who still loves him.
Yet never spectre blasted mortal sight,
As beauteous Laura blasted his, that night !

With smiling lip she came, and sparkling eye,
And strove to stay him as he hurried by ;
But stopped, astonished, at the fear she raised,
And on his altered brow intently gazed.
He stood transfixed, nor longer strove to fly,
Then thus, with faltering voice and downcast eye :—
“ I cannot speak — Julia will tell thee all !
Spare her — on me 'tis meet thy curse should fall !
Ev'n now a heavier punishment is mine —
Conscience ! there is no curse can kill like thine. —
And thou wilt hate — I hate myself — and yet,
Oh ! if thou canst — forgive me — and forget ! ”

He left the hall — he left her heart to bleed —
And spurred to swiftest pace his panting steed ;
And o'er the sounding plain as fiercely sped,
As if his own sad thoughts he would have fled.
Oh ! vain attempt ! the fiends his path pursue,
And rise for ever to his blasted view.

And still the maiden stood where she was left,
Of speech, of thought, almost of life, bereft.
Moments flew on ; unmarked they came, and passed,
Forms flitted by, and wondering glances cast ;
Yet still with open lip and outstretched hand,
Fixed to the spot, did that fair statue stand.
At length a sense of sickness at her heart,
Roused her to consciousness with sudden start.
Fear lest her wildness should excite surprise, —
A wish to hide from all enquiring eyes,
Prompted by these she sought th' accustomed bower,
Careless of dews, and mindless of the hour.
And soon the freshness of the evening air
Revived her to a sense of her despair.
At length the dreaded secret was revealed, —
Her doom was fixed — her destiny was sealed.
Her own misgivings — Desmond's altered brow —
Julia's strange tears — were all unravelled now !

But not, when falls the thunderbolt of fate,
Does the crushed victim feel at once its weight :
Hid in his heart, the arrow 'scapes his view —
The stroke that wounds, o'erwhelms and stuns him too ;
And he must pause to calculate his woes,
And probe his wounds before their depth he knows ;
And count his pangs, and trace them to their source,
Ere comes the full conviction of their force.

Thus, by degrees, on Laura's tortured soul,
The dire extent of her affliction stole,
And as she wandered on, she knew not where,
She moved the breathing image of despair.

Within, how dark, without her, all how bright !
Wide o'er the world, the moon-illuminated night,
Shed the mild radiance dearest to the Muse,
And softened — not extinguished — Nature's hues.
How gaily glides yon glittering orb along !
(While shuns her beams, the subject of my song) :
Now, in full splendour bursting on the eye,
Hides in her blaze her sisters of the sky ;
Now, sailing through a sea of fleecy clouds,
She shines the fairer than her form she shrouds.
With healing on its wing, the balmy breeze
Waved its light pinions o'er the whispering trees,
And the parched earth, refreshed by summer showers,
Poured forth the fragrance of ten thousand flowers.
But not fair Nature's face so softly veiled,
Not all the mingling odours she inhaled,
Could chase the clouds of agony that lower
On the fair forehead of that lovelier flower.

“ Do I then dream ? or did I rightly hear ?
Could Desmond speak the words that smote my ear ?

He could—he did—oh ! agonizing thought !
Oh ! vile betrayer of the love he sought !
And thou, false Julia ! whither art thou fled ?
Why heap'st not *thou* fresh insults on my head ?
Come, flushed with joy, in rosy smiles arrayed,
Come, triumph in the misery thou hast made ;
And with the ruins of my bliss o'erthrown,
Exulting frame the fabric of thine own !

“ Oh ! had a stranger wrought me such a wrong,
Though keen the pang, it had not pierced me long :
But thou ! my guide, companion, sister, friend !
With whom my very being seemed to blend—
Was it *thy* hand that forged the venomed dart,
And urged the death-blow to my bleeding heart ?
If e'er again that cruel hand I clasp,
Oh ! may my own be withered in the grasp !
What do I say ? oh ! feelings harsh and wild !
Alas ! my mother—is she not *thy child* ?”

Thus raved the injured maid—then with an air
Of calmer grief—more resolute despair—
“ Tell me,” she cried, “ bright orbs that roll above,
Unmoved by human care and human love,
In all your radiant round if ye descry
A wretch so utterly unblest as I ?

No! much of misery in your course ye see,
But none that suffer—none that *can*—like me.
Farewell all joys that heaven hath sent, or sends—
Farewell ye flattering dreams—youth, health, and
friends!

Lost are ye now—or if not lost, yet worse—
Each—each, by this, converted to a curse.
My youth! the cruel pledge of countless years,
Condemned to idle sighs and useless tears.
My health! the means more deeply to endure
A wound which will not kill—which nought can cure.
My friends! from henceforth doomed—alas! for them!
My woes to weep, my weakness to condemn.”

Stung by the thought, she raised her tearless eyes,
While from her lips these fearful accents rise;—
“ Oh! madness! hopeless misery’s last relief,
I call on thee, to mitigate my grief!
On thee I call! once, in prophetic hour,
These eyes beheld an instance of thy power,
(When my own heart was dancing with delight,)
And shrunk in childish horror from the sight.
Oh! if my niggard doom denies me bliss,
May it (I cried,) grant any ill but this!
‘ Let all the storms of fate around me burst,
But save me, Heaven, from this, the last and worst;

Beat every blast on my defenceless brow,
But spare me—dread destroyer ! spare me thou !
Yet will I woo thee, awful power ! again ; —
Lay now thy chilling hand upon my brain,
And blot and mingle all impressions there—
All trace of joy—all record of despair !
Oh ! that I could forget that I exist—
Struck out from sentient life's unhappy list !
Unconscious as the earth on which I tread,
Low on whose lap ev'n now I'll lay my head.
Oh ! take me, general mother, to thy breast,
And rock my anguish to eternal rest !”

The moon had set—and still the mourner lay,
Nor marked the weary moments roll away.
Dark o'er the scene, the shades of night extend ;
Cold on her head, the dews of heaven descend.
But colder dews are gathering on a brow,
Where outward damps descend innocuous now ;
And darker shadows of despairing love
Blot out a brighter heaven than that above.
Hark ! 'tis the sound of music swells the gale—
Her breath grows shorter, and her cheek more pale ;
Whose is that syren voice, whose dulcet sound
Floats in the air, and seems to warble round ?
Ah ! whose but Julia's ? once to Laura's ear
Sweet as the fabled music of the sphere—

Now harsh and hateful as the night-bird's scream,
That frights the startled slumberer from his dream.
" Sing on, thou cruel one !" aloud she cried—
" The voice of music well befits a bride.
Sing on, to drown my frenzy, lest it rave—
Soon shalt thou chaunt a dirge above my grave.
Who cares, alas ! how soon I sleep there now ?
Not thou, false girl, nor fickle Desmond, thou !
My father too forsakes me—even he,
Turns—with unwonted coolness—turns from me :
And while to Julia's heavenly voice he lists,
Forgets the wretched Laura yet exists."

But no—she wrongs their feelings—she is not,
Or by her sister, or her sire forgot,
And Julia, 'mid the circle's loud applause,
Thought but of her—her absence, and its cause ;
Already half-repenting even now,
Of her rash promise ; and her perjured vow,
To Laura made—which, though *she* heard it not,
Well may she fear by Heaven is unforgot.
Hark !—a light form and hasty step draw near—
A voice is sounding on her startled ear.
" Laura ! my sister ! is it thou indeed ?
How hast thou made this tortured bosom bleed !
Thee have we sought with sorrow and with fear,
And 'twas our last resource, to seek thee here.

And is it thus that Laura meets my view ?
With weeping eyes, and garments wet with dew ;
What means, my sister, this unwelcome sight,
And what the motive of so strange a flight ?
How ! silent yet ! and wilt thou not impart
The secret grief that weighs upon thy heart ?
Ah ! were the banquet o'er, I would beguile
These tears away, and teach thy lip to smile.
Come, loiterer, come ! and by thy presence add
Mirth to the gay, and rapture to the glad."

She stooped, her prostrate form to raise and clasp ;
But Laura shrunk, all shuddering, from her grasp.
" What have I done ? oh ! say for mercy's sake !
That thus you fly me, like the spotted snake ?"
Slow from the earth her swollen eyes she raised,
And on th' astonished Julia sternly gazed :—
" Alas ! till this sad night, I never knew
The serpent-sister I have loved in you !"

" What means, my Laura ? can I rightly hear ?
What words are these that meet my wondering ear ?
Oh ! chase those clouds of anger from thy brow,
Or say in what I've injured thee, and how ?"

" How hast thou injured me ? and dost thou ask ?
Me, wilt thou force to tear away the mask ?

How hast thou injured me ? oh ! cruel scorn !
That wrings my soul—then asks me why I mourn !
Go to thine erring heart, and ask of it —
I blame thee *not*—if *conscience* can acquit.”

Pale grew the cheek of Julia ; to her heart
A pang of sudden terror seemed to dart.
“ But no ! ” she thought, “ to him, and him alone,
The vows I tremble to reveal, are known.”

“ Laura ! ” she said, (and speaking, strove to hide
The secret fear she felt, by feigning pride)
“ Thy words I understand not, but I trust
Thy wrath to me will prove to be unjust.
I doubt not, soon, to clear these thoughts away ;
But now, nor time, nor place, permit my stay.
Wilt thou not come then ? ” — “ Look upon my face,
And in these swollen eyes thine answer trace !
“ I pray thee leave me, now ;—I too will go,—
Not to the banquet, fair dissembler, no !
Not to the feast, but to that couch of pain,
Whence, might I chuse, I ne’er would rise again.
But not to thine—think’st thou I there could sleep ?
Oh ! treacherous sister ! thou hast struck too deep ;
Yes, well on me thy wondering eyes may fall—
Well may thy cheek turn pale, — *I know it all !* ”

She needed no reply—the glance she cast
Had seemed the form it fell upon to blast :
And Julia stood transfixed, as she withdrew,
And vanished from her conscience-stricken view ; —
Unseen of all, in silence to sustain
A bursting heart, an almost maddened brain.

Was Julia happier then ? I would not weep
The tears which, that night, chased away her sleep —
I would not be condemned, one hour to bear
The harpy passions that her bosom tear —
The pangs that o'er her outraged conscience crept —
No ! sooner would I weep as Laura wept !

And now, that lovely mourner sought her room,
Alone to ponder on her altered doom.
How changed her fate ! but three short hours before,
Filled to the brim, her cup of bliss ran o'er.
With tears of blood, the bowl must henceforth drip,
While her own sister holds it to her lip !

She paced the lone apartment to and fro—
Now with a hurried step, and now a slow.
Grief never rests—as if it hoped to find
In ceaseless changes, some relief of mind.
She found it not—for each recurring thought
Still further drove the calmness which she sought.

As thus, with restless step, the room she paced,
She marked her gestures in the mirror traced ;
Oh ! what a change in one short fatal night !
She stopped and turned, and shuddered at the sight.
Unwonted care she had bestowed that eve,
(Her guests, and faithless suitor, to receive),
Unwonted care her beauteous form to grace,
And add fresh lustre to her lovely face ;
Then on the flattering mirror, as she passed,
One smiling glance of conscious beauty cast,
And blushed to think such pains she could bestow,
E'en for her Desmond's sake, on outward show.
Oh ! what a change in one short fatal night !
Despair had put those radiant smiles to flight ;
Had bid those blushes vanish from the view,
And tinged her pale cheek with its own sad hue.

Nor, gazing on her almost bridal dress,
Felt she a pang that agonized her less ;
Those garments, splendid still, though damped and
soiled, —
The scarf, whose graceful folds around her coiled —
The glittering girdle that adorned her waist
The band of gems, her lovely locks that graced.
Bracelets of pearl, that circling her soft arms,
Matched not the snowy whiteness of their charms —

All were his gift — and each endeared to her
By words to which 'twas rapture to recur,
Till this most fatal moment — but which now
Seemed each the dire pledge of a broken vow.
Oh! 'twas a sight too sad for her despair —
She tore the jewels from her dew-damp hair,
Unclasped the bracelets, and the zone unbound,
And dashed the glittering torment to the ground.
Then on her lonely couch her form she cast,
And sought *that* sleep she vainly wished her last.

When all untuned, the hearts of those that hear,
How grates the sound of mirth upon the ear!
How sad, that night, on hapless Laura's fell
The voice of music, once beloved so well!
But soon that sound grew fainter—night passed on —
The voice of music ceased, the guests were gone.
Then poured she forth the anguish of her breast
Through the long hours that misery mocked at rest.
“ Oh! when shall weary night be passed away,
And lingering twilight brighten into day?
Yet wherefore wish for day? the darkest gloom
Of deepest midnight, better suits my doom.
Why do I count the moments as they flee?
No golden moment brings repose to me.
One rest alone for misery can remain —
The dreamless rest from which none wake again.”

Hast thou e'er watched beside the bed of grief,
And marked, its sighs how deep, its sleep how brief?
The restless turns that scare away repose —
The eye that slumbers not, although it close?
Such feelings hast thou *witnessed*? then draw near
And heave for hers the sigh, and shed the tear.
Such feelings hast thou *felt*? then close the page! —
'Twere harsh to pain, when powerless to assuage.

At length subsides each low and heaving sigh,
And sleep has settled on that suffering eye.
Ah! surely now, she finds a short relief,
And soft oblivion lulls the sense of grief?
No! even in sleep shall misery pursue,
And dreams, the sad reality renew.
As throng the mingling phantoms to her brain,
The touch of fancy turns them all to pain.
Hark! the low muttered sentence — deep-drawn
sigh,
The start, the shiver, and the half-closed eye,
Reveal the unresting anguish of a soul
That drinks in vain of dark oblivion's bowl;
There read the mind's convulsions in the face,
And, if thou dar'st — its hidden tortures trace;
The thousand fearful phantoms there combined —
The dreams of horror not to be defined —

Till every aching sense and wildered thought
E'en to the verge of near delirium wrought,
And stretched each nerve upon the rack of pain —
She shrieks — and starts — and wakes to weep again !

—

END OF CANTO III.

CANTO IV.

THE BRIDAL.

Within that meek fair form were feelings high
Which deemed not, till they found, their energy.

BYRON.

DESMOND !—was his a sleepless pillow too ?
As hers he left—as her's he seeks to woo ?
Why wandering else, ere yet the day-star dawns,
Along those gloomy glades, and dewy lawns ?
While on that once bright eye, and open brow,
Sit faded care, and pale repentance, now ?

His steps are quickened, and his glance more free ; —
Who roused him from his pensive reverie ?
A horseman he, on wings of haste that sped
Along the way that to his mansion led.

He flew, the doubtful messenger to meet,
And found a summons to his Julia's feet.

But not with sparkling eye and sprightly air,
As love should meet, met this unhappy pair.
A mingled feeling of remorse and shame,
Checked his unfinished accents as they came;
And she—the maid—although she blushed not now,
Wore a deep settled sadness on her brow.
At length the troubled silence Julia broke,
And with a painful effort thus she spoke :

“ Desmond, farewell ! this fatal hour we part —
In giving mine, I break my sister's heart.
To thee whom both have loved, too long, too well —
The pang it costs us both I need not tell.
I need not bid thee sorrow for our sake, —
Thou who dost all our agony partake.
Ah ! rather check that sorrow in its growth ;
And since thou canst not love, forget us, both.
Farewell for ever here—in realms above,
We yet may meet, where all that meet may love.
Then fly, ere yet too late, my Desmond fly !
For *thou* shalt yet be happy—and shall I,
When such a load is lifted from my mind,
Grieve for the glorious pang it leaves behind ?

No ! though awhile frail nature may lament,
’Tis not of virtuous deeds that we repent.
Since we *must* mourn, ’tis holy tears we’ll shed,
Not those which folly weeps for virtue fled.”

“ Is this thy last decision ? ” — “ Desmond, yes !
And now farewell ! and Heaven thy footsteps bless.
Repeat no more — to aggravate my pain,
All thou canst urge — and oh ! must urge in vain.”

“ Fear it not, Julia ! I too can be firm,
Yes, even Desmond shall deserve the term.
Dear as thou art — too deeply, sadly dear,
No words of mine shall henceforth wound thine ear.
Know, cruel girl, ev’n thee I can resign,
Mine shalt thou *freely* be, or never mine !
Yet let us part in peace, since here we part —
Peace, did I say ? ’tis banished from my heart ;
Far hence, self-exiled, shall thy Desmond roam,
Renounce his kindred, and forsake his home.
Yet where the sacrifice ? deprived of thee,
Oh ! what is country, what is life, to me ?

“ Nay, talk not thus ! a thousand tender ties
To link thy heart to life shall yet arise ;
What ! has thy country then no further claim
On powers like thine — nor yet thy own high fame ?

Hast thou no friends as fond, though not so dear,
As those from whom fate separates thee here ?
Desmond ! we both have erred — must suffer both, —
For bitter are the fruits of folly's growth.
As once in faults, in firmness let us vie,
And boldly meet the fate we cannot fly :
Nor shrink the penance we have earned, to bear —
The last, the worst of errors, is despair.
Go ! in the glorious paths of public life,
Efface the memory of this mental strife ;
Go, my lov'd Desmond ! on a worthier stage,
Forget the follies of thine earlier age.
There may thy honours with thy years increase,
Fame shout applause, and Conscience whisper peace :
And should'st thou wed — whoe'er the blest one be,
Oh ! may she love — like Laura, and like me !”

“ Mock me not, Julia, with the name of love,
While mine for thee, by tortures thou dost prove.
But thou art right — 'tis meet that we should part,
And duty own no rival in my heart.
And now farewell ! to England and to you,
A long and sad — perhaps a last — adieu !”

He took her hand — but when he felt it shake,
And heard the deep sigh from her bosom break,

“ Julia ! ” he said — and powerless to controul
The mixed emotions struggling in his soul,
For one wild moment snatched her to his breast,
And on her lip one parting kiss imprest.

But not unseen, that agonized farewell,
And not unheard those parting accents fell.
Her *Father* heard them, as in thoughtful mood
He entered there — and motionless he stood !
Then from his lip broke forth these words of ire,
While his brow kindled, and his eye flashed fire : —
“ Degenerate girl ! and thou, perfidious youth !
Is this a sister’s love, a suitor’s truth ?
Something of change my fears had dreamed, — but not
That faith’s and friendship’s ties were all forgot.
Can Desmond thus betray ? — I vainly deemed
He was, in sooth, ev’n that which he hath seemed ;
By nature formed o’er mean deceit to soar,
And valuing honor than existence more.
Such was my trust — and what is thy return ?
To win the gentle heart thou now would’st spurn —
The laws of friendship and of love to break,
Insult the father, and the child forsake.
Then think not Julia’s hand I will bestow
On the false heart that works her sister’s woe .
No ! even for her own unworthy sake,
I charge thee here a last farewell to take.

And thou, base girl, whose once beloved name,
Shall henceforth flush thy father's cheek with shame,
Hence from my sight — nay, do not kneel to me!
Not I, but injured Laura, claims thy knee."

He ceased—but ere the astonished youth could speak,
Or died th' indignant blush from Julia's cheek,
Young Laura entered, nor betrayed surprise
At the strange scene, that, entering, met her eyes.
Not unapprised of what she witnessed there,
No wonder mixed with her collected air ;
A flush of high resolve was on her cheek,
As stood the glowing maid in act to speak ;
While mingled feelings of surprise and awe,
Hushed to expecting silence, those who saw.

" My Father !—Julia !—Desmond !" she exclaimed,
" I have heard all—but be the deed unblamed !
I need not say 'twas chance that led me near,
But haste to themes more worthy of your ear.
To thee, my sister ! I address me first,
And ask forgiveness of the wrath I nursed ;
Wrapped be the past in dark oblivion's pall —
Thy generous conduct now hath cancelled all.
Yet think not thou shalt suffer for my sake—
I come, thy self-inflicted bonds to break.

Desmond ! (she faltered as she spoke the name,
But soon the transient feeling overcame,)
Desmond, 'tis not that *now* thy choice has erred,
That to another is thy love transferred,
But that thou didst not in her ear alone
Breathe the false vows I then had never known.
It would have spared some pangs—but—they are past,
And this, my first reproach, shall be my last.
And now, my Father, listen to my prayer,
And prove thy daughter's peace indeed thy care.
Ah ! why is Desmond blamed by that dear voice
Because his heart has made a worthier choice ?
Thou think'st perchance—alas ! the thought is vain,
That ties, once severed, can unite again.
Hear then my words !—should Desmond at my feet,
His perjured vows of constancy repeat—
Should he, e'en now, forgotten oaths renew,
And this sad heart again believe them true—
I would not listen to the treacherous voice,
Which for one hour could waver in its choice.
Why should'st thou then inflict a needless pain,
Since Julia's loss can ne'er be Laura's gain ?
Far be from thee, my sire ! oh ! far from me—
The fruitless cruelty of that decree !
Bless these thy children ! (as she spoke they knelt)
And wept what neither spoke,—what each had felt.

Bless them, my sire ! that generous task be thine,
And in *their* happiness restore me *mine* !”

“ Heroic child !” the wondering parent cried,
“ No longer now my pity but my pride !
Desmond ! her sire forgives thee for her sake—
Take yet a wife from me—thy Julia take !
And hear a parent’s prayer, all gracious Power,
And bless my children ! bless their bridal hour !
Oh ! may this single fault, forgiven by Thee,
The earnest of a thousand virtues be !
May to late age their honoured life extend,
Pure in its progress, peaceful in its end !
And if there be a lot more blest than this,
Bestow it—on the donor of their bliss !”

* * * * *

Weeks lagged along—and brought the appointed noon,
For *her* sad wish too slow, and yet too *soon*—
They stood before the altar—side by side,
How, in that awful moment, looked the Bride ?
Fair as the radiant forms that flit before
The Poet’s eye, and teach him to adore ;
Yet with a painful tremor, which she strove
In vain to struggle with, and rise above ;
With lips, that, faltering, half refused to speak,
And tears and blushes mingling on her cheek.

Such is the wont of brides—and keenest eyes
Saw nought in those emotions to surprise.
For well the happiest maid may dread the hour,
That yields her to a husband's untried power,—
The hour that rends her from a parent's heart,
And bids her from a parent's roof depart.
But did the burning blush on Julia's cheek,
No guiltier shame than modesty's bespeak?
Owned her fast-falling tears no deeper source
Than mild regret, unmingled with remorse?
Alas for guilt!—her Desmond only knew
The pangs they cost her—for, he shared them too!

Lo! for her own sad sacrifice arrayed,
There too, the young self-immolated maid;
How did *she* look and feel in that dread hour,
Which placed all further change beyond her power?
In *her* the tide of feeling seemed to sleep—
She did not smile — she did not, could not weep;
But stood with folded arms, and downcast mien,
As if unconscious of the passing scene.
White as the robe she wore, her pallid cheek—
Her look, composed, but sad, and firm, though meek;
While, through the foldings of the bridal veil,
None saw, her mien how sad, her cheek how pale!
Once—only once—her downcast eye she raised—
Once—only once—in agony she gazed.

'Twas when — by *him* her heart's sole idol placed —
A hand not hers that mystic symbol graced,
Within whose slender circlet's magic round,
Once the whole compass of her hopes was bound.
One glance she cast, as if to gaze her last, —
And felt, the bitterness of death was past !

The rite was ended — and the bridal train
In long procession, left the holy fane.
On the young pair, then gratulations prest,
And Laura's voice rose faltering, with the rest ;
Yet though she listened, and her pale lip stirred,
Scarce knew she spoke, or noted what she heard.
But soon — too soon — in one appalling sound,
To *her* pained ear, all other tones were drowned ;
To keenest pangs she started from her trance,
And cast on Julia one reproachful glance.
And what the sound which burst upon the gale,
While *she* too started, and her cheek turned pale ? .
It is the bridal bell — whose tones exult
O'er joys that seem her sorrows to insult ;
And Laura felt it so — she felt, their bliss
Required no aid — and might have spared her this :
For every peal of that exulting bell,
Seemed to *her* ear her own funereal knell.

They reached the hall — and while the joyous crowd
Around the new made Bride their homage bowed,

She left her sister's room, and sought her own,
To ask for mercy ev'n at Mercy's throne,
And with uplifted hands and bended knees,
The anguish of her soul, in prayer to ease ;
'Twas less in words than thoughts — but not in
vain —

Who sends the trial, teaches to sustain.
Though to her lip the prayer refused to rise,
It gushed in healing torrents from her eyes.
Thus heaves torn Hecla's breast with ceaseless
throes,

Till forth, at length, the fiery torrent flows,
And as the burning deluge sweeps the plain,
The tortured mountain sinks to rest again.
Again the snow-wreath gathers on its brow,
And hides the lasting flame which lurks below.
Ah ! who would dream, save he whose bosom feels,
The fire-flood which that frozen veil conceals ?
Or guess, by yon poor victim's placid air,
Her calmness was the calmness of despair ?

Yet rose o'er feeling's half-extinguished fires,
That fortitude which hopelessness inspires.
Back to her lip the long lost smile returned,
Bright on her cheek the blooming lustre burned,
While none could read, beneath that specious bloom,
The splendour of a lamp that lights the tomb !

The Bride has left the mansion of her sire,
Ere yet she sees the nuptial moon expire ;
And with her go her still enamoured spouse,
And the sad victim of his perjured vows ;
She feared to go—yet more she feared to stay,
Left to her thoughts a victim and a prey.
Each mode presented but a choice of pain ;
'Twas grief to go, and torture to remain.
Here should she rest—before her mental eyes,
His image, as her lover, still would rise.
How could it fail, where not one bower of bliss,
But memory linked with some fond vow of his ?
Hourly to see him as her sister's lord,
More chance, she deemed, of calmness might afford ;
Might by degrees inure her to the thought,
And duty's lesson be by habit taught.

They roved—what boots it *where?*—*she* could not find
In other lands, the peace she left behind.

Oh ! could the seas they crossed, the realms they
sought,

Have drowned regret, or dissipated thought,
Then had she shaken sorrow to the winds,
The sigh that tortures, and the tear that blinds ;
Then had she fled away and been at rest,
And Peace, the halcyon, built within her breast.

But on the hopeless eye of misery, strike
Arabia's wilds, and Eden's bowers, alike :
For her in vain—the subject of my lay,
Wide earth's enchantments all their power display.
For her in vain, Helvetia's mountains rise,
Or sunny Italy's enchanted skies.
Care chilled the glowing scene where'er she strayed—
Shed jaundiced tints on all that she surveyed—
Parched in the sun-beam, murmured in the gale,
And like the avenging demon of the tale, *
With strange and dread ubiquity endued,
Met her where'er she roved — where'er she fled, pur-
sued.

In vain she sought to banish from her breast
The tyrant passion that consumed its rest ;
In vain did prudence, duty, virtue, strive
Her reason's wavering firmness to revive ;
Her's was a foe with mightier arms endued,
Formed to be fled, but not to be subdued.

Nor love alone :—deep rankling in her mind,
A darker direr passion lurked behind :
Oh ! had her better feelings been aware
Envy, the fiend, had gained admittance there,

* Frankenstein.

How had she writhed in agony of soul,
And striven its fearful triumphs to control !
But slow at first th' insidious serpent crept
O'er the disordered soul where reason slept.
And ere she guessed the passion by its pain,
'Twas all too late its ranklings to restrain.
And thus each glance of Desmond, — every tone,
That, springing from a heart no more her own,
Gave joy to Julia's breast, — to her's would bring
A pang more piercing than the scorpion's sting.

When torn by tyrant Death from those we love,
We bend, obedient, to a power above :
And, the first anguish over, fondly dwell
On the lost friends we loved in life so well.
'Tis joy to think their thoughts on us were cast —
Bliss to believe they loved us to the last.
But when we see all blithely as before,
Beat the false heart, that beats for us no more ;
Oh ! then, though anger fire the unwilling breast,
To which the honied poison once was prest —
Then though the jealous fiend her entrance gain,
Where scorn and just contempt alone should reign, —
Some small indulgence, erring nature claims,
And sternest virtue pities while it blames.

Yet 'twas alone she sighed—alone she wept—
While o'er her soul the secret canker crept,
And robbed her days of peace, her nights of rest—
She hid the baleful passion in her breast.
Despite the struggling tempest of her soul,
Such was the sternness of her self-control,
They who had watched her face, and marked her mien,
Had deemed her heart at rest, her soul serene.

Thus in the polished marble—strange abode !
Lonely and monstrous lurks the bloated toad ;
There, mid the solid masses, firm and dry,
Breathes without air, and feeds without supply ;
And, battenning on the heart, works inward harm,
While all without is bright, and cold, and calm !

END OF CANTO IV.

CANTO V.

THE FLIGHT.

This is the very extacy of love !

SHAKESPEARE.

TIME hastened on — weeks, months, had rolled away,
And nearer drew the long appointed day ;
The day when Laura, destined to depart,
Must rend her Desmond's image from her heart ;
Or, if such glorious conquest could not be,
In that lost heart alone his image see.

That hour — the hour of trial — came at length,
And found her nerved to more than mortal strength ;
A strength like hers the dying culprit shows,
Who mounts the scaffold which must end his woes.
Her sister wept — but Laura had no tears ;
Grief melts the soul, but hopeless misery sears.

Few were the faltering words that Desmond spoke,
Yet seemed those few her friendship to invoke.
“ I had not dared to ask it, hadst thou not
My fault forgiven, and my love forgot.”
Ah ! little knew he of that wounded heart,
Whence memory could with life alone depart !

Fair were the lovely scenes through which she passed,
But clouds of grief their sunshine overcast.
Those eyes, to every object once awake,
Of loveliest scenes seemed now no note to take,
But glanced, in careless vacancy around,
Or fixed their listless gaze upon the ground.
But when her father's mansion met her view,
Back from the sight, all-shuddering, she withdrew :
And whence that wild emotion, new and strange ?
What sudden impulse prompted such a change ?
Once, if but absent for a single night,
Her heart would bound with rapture at the sight ;
There were her days of peaceful childhood passed,
There, dreams of early love too bright to last ;
And thence arose the anguish which she felt, —
For misery loathes the spot where bliss hath dwelt.

Yet still a sire remained, as fond as e'er
Made a dear lovely daughter all his care ;

Still of a doating mother unbereft
Though much was lost, much yet was surely left.
Thus reason urged — yet brought she no relief —
Grief, in despite of reason, still is grief.
Her heart had broke with Desmond's broken vow,
And felt that nought was left to beat for, now.

Such was the conflict which her soul sustained,
As now the mansion of her sires she gained.
Wo ! to the heartfelt joy that hailed her there !
A joy that gave new pangs to her despair.
Wo ! to the tears of pleasure and of pride
They shed to see their darling at their side !
'Tis true they marked the paleness of her cheek,
But what of that ? her frame was ever weak.
Had she not journeyed many a weary league,
And well might show such symptom of fatigue ?
A few short hours of undisturbed repose,
Would tinge the lily with th' accustomed rose.

And soon, in truth, they saw her cheek resume
A glow more brilliant than its pristine bloom ;
But far unlike that ever varying hue
Which rose, and flushed and fleeted from the view ;
It was a settled, fixed, unearthly streak,
That fevered now for ever on her cheek.

Yet those who judge alone by outward show,
Saw nought but health and gladness in its glow.
True there was one that otherwise believed —
A mother's eye can rarely be deceived.
She looked beyond the outward mien, and guessed
How keen the pangs that could not be expressed :
Their cause she questioned not — too well she knew
The source from whence those gloomy feelings grew,
And mid the dazzling blaze of pomp and show,
She strove to wile away her sense of woe.

Where music's melting tones the soul entrance —
Where in soft mazes swells the mirthful dance —
Where, in the mimic scene, are sorrows shown,
Whose deeper dye withdraws us from our own ;
Or comic wit's fantastic freaks beguile
E'en from the lip of woe the unwilling smile —
Such were the scenes through which her child she led,
O'er wounded feelings such the balm she shed ;
But when was misery e'er dispelled by mirth ?
Or where but in ourselves has bliss its birth ?
Can the gay revel, or the crowded rout
Admit content, or shut affliction out ?
A brief reply yon fading form shall speak —
No, these restoratives are all too weak.
The statue of herself she seemed to stand,
No pleasure moved her, and no passion fanned.

Though still her head those dark brown tresses load,
Neglected now the lovely burden flowed ;
Though still a languid smile her lips might part,
E'en as she smiled, betraying tears would start.
Yes ! now she wept in agony of grief,
And found in floods of tears a vain relief.
Far from the haunts of busy life she fled,
'Mid groves and gloomy shades to hide her head ;
In fancy's dangerous wand'rings there indulged,
And to the winds and waves her woes divulged ;
In frantic ravings called on Desmond's name,
Then blushed — as back on echo's wings it came.

Perhaps, indulged in that excess of grief,
Its very greatness might have given relief.
But still, with erring zeal, her mother strove
To lure her from the memory of her love.
To lighter cares though pleasure failed to lead,
Where pleasure failed, employment might succeed ;
E'en stern reproach, though heard at first with pain,
Might rouse to mental energy again.
That hand, so listless now, her cares engage
Again to strike the lyre, or turn the page ;
But not, though far too duteous to refuse,
For her could soothe the lyre or charm the muse,
And from the transient trial, forced and brief,
She sought repose in indolence of grief.

Her flowers in all their former beauty blew,
But no soft eyes admired them as they grew :
Around her bower the deadly nightshade twined,
But no fair hands the noxious weed unbind :
She turned the tedious page, but found no more
Wit's brilliant flash, or wisdom's ample store ;
She saw her once loved harp neglected stand,
And dropped the pencil from her powerless hand.


Thus dragged she life along, a tedious weight,
And seemed to bow, submissive, to her fate ;
But *only* seemed — for in her secret soul
Tumultuous schemes and vague intentions roll ;
Till each wild thought became with *frenzy* rife,
And parting reason perished in the strife.

One night a sudden gladness lit her eye —
Her speech grew fluent, and her spirits high
As if some sudden resolution formed,
The frozen tide of life renewed and warmed.
But soon, habitual grief resumed her breast,
And, pleading illness, she retired to rest.
But first embraced her parents o'er and o'er,
As those embrace who part to meet no more.
And such a look of tender sorrow cast,
It seemed to say—this look may be the last !

Not unobserved that sudden change of mien
By her fond mother—nor that glance unseen ;
So firm, yet meek—resolved, and yet resigned—
In vain she sought to chase it from her mind :
“ Ah ! why (she cried,) in youth’s fair opening day
Weeps thus, my hapless child, that youth away ?
Why fail to bring, the arts I fondly try,
Life to her cheek, and lustre to her eye ?
Amusement charms not—ev’n employments fail,
By what new arts her heart can I assail ?
What arts ? the dearest art a Mother knows, —
Who seek to soothe, must *share*, the sufferer’s woes.
Why have I thus delayed the sole relief,
Maternal love can minister to grief ?
To aid, at least, her trial to endure,
And soothe to sleep a grief I cannot cure.”

Such were the thoughts that through her mind revolve,
Such this fond parent’s last and best resolve ;
And soon as day’s returning influence smiled,
She came, to seek and commune with her child.

But who can paint her terror and surprise
When Laura met not her inquiring eyes ?
Trembling with fears she yet could scarce define,
She flew to seek her in th’ accustomed shrine.



That once beloved, but now neglected, bower,
So oft a favourite haunt in happier hour.
Deep horror seized her when she found her not,
And dire forebodings of she knew not what.
Back to the house with trembling steps she flew,
And questioned all she met, of all they knew ;
And each she asked, th' infectious terror caught,
For none could give th' intelligence she sought ;
From tongue to tongue the quick inquiry spread
Till loud alarm succeeded silent dread.
They sought the fields, the cottages, around,
Where'er they guess'd, or dream'd, she might be found ;
Sought with untiring zeal and anxious care,
Till restless search subsided in despair.

Yet might not long that gloomy feeling reign,
Ere hope revived, though mingled still with pain.
'T was rumoured that a young and lovely maid
Had been by illness on her road delayed.
Her youth, her charms, her unprotected state,
Had raised an anxious interest in her fate ;
And slander's voice by turns, and pity's, woke,
To wound the wounded, or to ward the stroke ;
While many a wondering voice pronounced it strange
That one so fair, alone was left to range.
What then, if this were so, remained to do ?
What, but the frantic wanderer to pursue ?

It was resolved—and day's declining fire
Far on his journey saw the sorrowing sire.
He traced the fugitive for many a league,
Nor yet had sought repose, nor felt fatigue.
Though urged to agony, each flying steed,
To him they seemed to linger in their speed.
Nor paused his haste till tidings reached his ear,
That seemed to prove the hapless wanderer near.

* * * * *

They led the father's faltering steps to where
Silent and sad reclined the sorrowing fair;
Her hands were both uplifted to a brow
Which deep and settled anguish seemed to bow,
And o'er them flowed the dark dishevelled hair,
Whose sable contrast showed them yet more fair.
She started as they entered, raised her head,
And shook through all her frame in sudden dread.
Grief wrung the father's heart — but pride and
shame

The softer feelings of his soul o'ercame.

“Bane of thy sire's renown—thy sister's bliss—
Laura! unhappy Laura! how is this?
Doth frenzy prompt so strange a flight? or why,
Why art thou here, and whither wouldst thou fly?”

“To him—to Desmond—to my own adored !
And who is he shall tear me from my lord ?
Has not heaven heard and registered his vow ?
And, if it ever bound, it binds him now.
Let Julia, then, her baseless claim resign,
Since heaven itself bears witness he is mine.”

“What means my child ?” the wondering father said.
“Know’st thou not Desmond is to Julia wed ?
Alas ! my love, too well thou knew’st before
Whate’er he was, he now is thine no more !
Why shrinks my Laura ! can it be that thou
So firm of purpose once, canst falter now ?
When Desmond’s altered feeling, first confest,
Raised just resentment in thy father’s breast,
Say, interposed not then thy generous pride
To turn the torrent of my wrath aside ?
Did not that noble soul indignant start,
And spurn a hand unproffered by the heart ?
Thyself to Desmond gave a dearer spouse—
Thyself released him from his perjured vows,
And broke the chain which bound him still to thee,
By honour linked, when love had ceased to be.
All this thy calmer thoughts will sure discern,
And prompt thy better judgment to return.”

“Return !” she shrieked, “I never will return :
’Tis duty calls—her dictates shall I spurn ?

World—father—mother—now are nought to me—
My love ! my lord ! my spouse ! I come to thee.
And if thou still my fond request deny,
To live for thee—at least for thee to die.”

“ Oh frantic child !” th’ indignant sire replied,
“ Oh wretched father !” too severely tried !
“ Had I, in thee, but followed to the tomb
Youth in its prime, and beauty in its bloom,
I then had said—though weeping o’er the grave
From which my fruitless cares had failed to save—
‘ Eternal Judge ! thy mandate I obey—
What mercy gave, let justice take away.’
But thus to see my tenderest cares returned—
Scorned by the child I reared—forsaken—spurned—
Oh wretched father ! once so full of bliss,
Why died I not before I witnessed this ?”

On his clasped hands his reverend head he bowed,
And, in his spirit’s anguish, wept aloud !

Who that has seen young beauty bathed in tears,
And clouds o’ercast the morning of her years,
A sight so full of sorrow could forget ?
Ah ! none that e’er had hearts and eyes ;—and yet
More deep the pity as the pang more deep,
When hoary age and hardy manhood weep.

Could Laura, then, resist that sight of woe,
Which ev'n indifference had bewailed ? Ah no !
Entreaties—threats—commands—she had withstood,
But tears—her father's tears—at once subdued.
Around his aged neck her arms she threw,
On his full heart she hid her face from view;
While he, relenting, clasped her to his breast,
And dewed with tears the fragile form he pressed.

Then fast and free the storm of passion came,
Till the strong agony convulsed her frame.
Grieved for her grief, her father strove the while
With soothing words her sorrow to beguile.
But when he found his fondest efforts vain,
Her misery's hopeless madness to restrain—
That every theme he thought of to controul,
Urged but anew, the anguish of her soul,—
Impatient of the grief, at first deplored,
By turns he wept, rebuked her, and implored ;
But still her pale face on his bosom hid,
She heard him not, or marked not if she did.

Mistaken sire ! the fruitless task resign ;
The voice of nature is more loud than thine.
Say, wouldst thou soothe her ? give her sorrow scope,
With woes like these can consolation cope ?

Go, meet, and stay, the lightning in its path—
Arrest the rolling thunder in its wrath—
Hush the loud waves when He has given the word,
At whose command their boiling depths are stirred —
Check the commissioned whirlwind in mid air—
But preach not to the ravings of despair !

At length—exhausted by its own excess—
Ceased of itself, the storm of her distress.
The madness of the moment now was spent—
Fled all the fearful energy it lent,
And fainting in her father's arms, she lay
A fair, but lifeless form, of breathing clay.
The tender care mistaken love bestowed
To lead her back to life's relentless load,
Restored her from her fearful trance at length,
But not to mental peace or mental strength.
Both, ere that tempest of the soul had fled,
And left despair and frenzy in their stead.

And was it granted then,—the impious prayer
She raised to heaven in uttermost despair ?
Yes ! Madness heard her on that fearful night,
And mocked awhile, then seized her in its might !
Her parents hid their faces from the truth ;
To time they trusted—trusted to her youth—

Believed—asserted—all would yet be well,
Till forc'd conviction broke the unwilling spell ;
And hoped with hearts unfailing and untired,
Till baffled hope retreated and expired !

Compelled at length—their treasure they resigned
To ties less tender, and to hearts less kind.
But not till every art essayed in vain,
Had failed alike to soothe or to restrain ;
Not till, while reason slept and passion raved,
Her own rash hand had sought the doom she craved.
Such lengths can misery lead when reason flies,
And blest Religion's better aid denies !

CANTO VI.

THE MANIAC.

Her trembling tongue the motive would explain
 That fixed her thus, alas ! to live in vain.
 Some dread remembrance of departed joy
 Beguiled her reason, powerful to destroy ;
 Left her like yonder leafless shrub to fade,
 Hid from the light, and withering in the shade.

ANON.

It is not dawn yet ; closed is every eye—
 All sleep but those—that wake to think and sigh !
 And who is she who seeks yon summer bower,
 With pensive steps, at this untimely hour ?
 In whose bent form, though scarcely past its prime,
 Grief—withering grief—has done the work of Time ?
 Not her's the sleep that sheds around the blest,
 That calm repose, of all their bliss the best—

Her's is the troubled trance that waits on those
Who sink, from wretchedness, to short repose.
The winter's weary months have passed away, —
Its long-drawn night, and gloom-enveloped day —
But no bright ray, defying fear's control,
Wakes into life the winter of her soul.
Gay Spring has led her laughing train along
With wreath of opening flowers, and voice of song,
But no return of reason in her child,
On the pale spring-tide of her hopes has smiled.
And now she flies the couch which sleep has fled,
For waking dreams—less wild but not less dread ;
Of pleasures which shall never more return —
Of friends snatched from her by a fate too stern.
Within that bower, while yet a youthful bride,
Oft had she sat—her lover by her side ;—
Around that bower in childhood's early day,
Oft were her sportive cherubs wont to play.
How changed the partner of her youthful vow,
By grief how changed !—and where her children, now ?
One, lost to life, and all it could confer —
One—though she trusted happy,—lost to *her*.
Such were the thoughts that silently and slow
Shed o'er that Matron's brow untimely snow ;
Weighed on her soul, and saddened in her mien,
And waked those bitterest tears — the tears that flow
unseen.

Lo ! now the curtains of the night undrawn,
Ope the soft eyelids of the dewy dawn.
O'er all the burnished east, the dusky grey,
Kindling to gold, proclaims the coming day.
Long streaks of crimson stain the azure sky,
And darker shades in lovely contrast vie ;
While the last lingering star's expiring rays,
Fade in the splendor of a brighter blaze,
And from the dewy earth the vapors rise,
Rolling their matin incense to the skies.
To deeper silence Nature now seems hushed,
And richer tints the firmament have flushed ;
The clouds roll back—the gates of heaven unfold—
He comes—he comes—a ball of burning gold !
Earth rising, hails him from the realms of night,
Flings back her dusky veil, and drinks the light.
O ! glorious orb ! if I could bow the knee,
To aught beneath thy Maker,—it were thee !
Thee in whose beams we read, though faint and dim,
All that our dazzled fancy dreams of HIM !

Whose is the fate so utterly forlorn,
That yields not to the burst of such a morn ?
Where is the heart so hopelessly undone,
That can resist the rise of such a sun ?
Nor, like the Theban head, of other days,
Give forth glad sounds responsive to his rays ?¹⁰

To greet his dawn a thousand warblers throng,
And pour their souls in ecstasy of song,—
To drink his beams a thousand flowers unfold,—
A thousand insects wave their wings of gold,—
And ev'n the mourner gazed upon his light,
Till tears of softer sorrow dimmed her sight.

But who is *she* that rushes to her arms,
Bright as the morn—though 'tis with tearful charms?
Lo ! the sad dame, at one delighted glance
Roused even to rapture from her long drawn trance,
Imprints fond kisses on her Julia's cheek,
And weeps the welcome which she cannot speak !

Blest was the meeting !—oh ! how more than blest,
When to a parent's beating bosom prest,
The child that feels, by sad conviction taught,
There only dwells the sympathy it sought :
Err as it may, and wander where it will,
That *there* is pardon and reception still !

Feelings like these, on that delighted day,
Drove for awhile the clouds of care away,
And o'er the present scene such radiance cast,
They half forgot the future and the past.
Domestic love ! thou sweet and sacred friend,
In thee what depths of untold transport blend !

Thine the first charm around our cradle shed,
Thine the sole balm that soothes our dying bed !
Calm are thy joys—yet these the joys that last,
When passion's stormy pleasures all are past—
Form our best bliss below, and point the way
To kindred raptures in the realms of day.

With the first glance of morning's earliest beams,
Rose Julia from a train of troubled dreams ;—
Rose but to realize, with coming day,
Scenes sadder still than slumber can pourtray ;
To seek the Maniac in her sad abode,
Where wildered fancies still to frenzy goad,—
Who deemed the sad and solitary cell,
Where fate and frenzy destined her to dwell,
A world where parted spirits held their rest,
Till called to join the mansions of the blest ;—
Yet still at times relaxed the gloomy spell,
And then she calmly spoke, and reasoned well.
Thus hope and fear their breasts alternate swayed,
And mingled sunshine with the darkest shade.

The mournful sire his spouse and daughter blessed,
While deep foreboding fears his soul oppressed,
Till lost to sight, he watched them on their way,
Then sought his lonely hall, to weep and pray.

As near their goal of grief the travellers drew,
And rose the lofty edifice to view,
Then first—for until then had neither spoke—
Their sorrow's silence thus the mother broke:—
“ Oh ! thou, my first, my latest care below—
Cease, self-accused, to aggravate our woe :
Oft leads a transient *error*, tho' abjured,
To ills as great as *guilt* has e'er endured.
Since misery Heaven inflicts on all mankind,
Be thou, my child, to Heaven's high will resigned.
Oh ! how resigned, how happy can I be,
While yet one blessing cleaves to me—in thee !

E'en while she spoke of happiness, she wept,
And to her daughter's eyes th' infection crept.
She pressed her cold hand with a hand that burned,
But tears were all the answer she returned.

Long had their journey seemed—and yet they start,
And in thick tumults throbs each laboring heart,
When, to its painful termination brought,
They stood before the sufferer whom they sought.
There, in fantastically wild array,
Low on the earth the lovely Maniac lay ;—
Her hair, which hung unbraided and unbound,
A wreath of roses and carnations crowned.—

The bright confusion floating o'er her face,
Gave each pale charm a melancholy grace,
And half concealed one snowy hand, which raised
Some treasure upon which she fondly gazed,
Gazed with apparent joy, and pensive smile,
Though tears stole down her pallid cheek the while ;
And as she heard the opening door uncloze,
She hid it in her robe, and slowly rose.

Had then the ardent Julia been alone,
Straight to her sister's feet she would have flown ;
But fearful for her child's bewildered brain,
The mother strove that ardour to restrain ;
And, soft advancing, " See, my love ! " she said,
" I've brought thee here fresh garlands for thy head."

The maiden shook the dark locks from her face,
And pressed her mother in a long embrace.
" Oh ! thou art ever welcome—ever dear,
Thus fondly clasping, do I hail thee here —
But who is this ? (away ye blinding tears !)
How like my once-loved sister she appears !"

" I *am* that wretched sister," Julia said,
And bent her knee, and bowed her lovely head ;
" But oh ! thou injured angel, ere I dare
To clasp that form, so faded, yet so fair,

Those genèrous lips *that* pardon must pronounce,
All claim to which, my conscience must renounce.
Lo ! here I bend to earth my suppliant knee,
And ask forgiveness of my God, and thee !
Heaven will not grant—if thou refuse—my suit.
Laura ! thy sister asks—yet, thou art mute !”

“ My sister ! ha ! what sister ?—I have none !
There *was* a time indeed—but *she* is gone,
And would not seek me (when to Desmond wed)
In these dark mansions of the loathsome dead.
Thou know’st not then, fair stranger, I perceive,
The cause for which I rave, for which I grieve !
Say, in that fatal cause shall I reveal
Pangs, which I pray that *thou* mayst *never* feel !
Methinks ’twould give my wretchedness relief
To pour in pity’s ear the plaints of grief.”

Alas ! dear injured girl, though all too well,
I know the fearful tale thy lips would tell,
Speak ! if a moment’s peace it will impart—
Speak ! though each word should sting me to the heart.”

“ Rise, then, and listen to the tale of woe,
That bids my never-ceasing tears to flow :
Thine own, perchance, may mingle ere it end ;
Rise, lovely stranger, to my tale attend.

“ There was a soldier once—he loved me well—
How dearly *I* loved *him*, these tears may tell ;
I had a sister, too, as fair as thou—
Locks of as lovely gold adorned her brow.
Such was her graceful form, her air, her mien—
Oh ! never, sure, was such resemblance seen.
There is no point in which it seems to fail ;
Lovelier than thou though,—she was not so pale.
The soldier saw us both, and both admired—
But me he loved—and equal love inspired.
I ne’er had studied, for I scorned, the art,
To hide the genuine movements of my heart.
That heart confessed, and gloried in its flame ;
To feel it, and be proud of it—the same.
Yet, strange to say ! *my* love was scarce confest,
Ere *his* appeared extinguished in his breast ;
Perhaps he deemed his suit too quickly gained,
And scorned a heart so easily obtained :
Howe’er it was — the change I soon perceived ;
For when was quick-eyed passion e’er deceived ?
Yet, though I marked, and mused at, his neglect,
How could I Julia as the cause suspect ?
In form and mind all lovely though she be,
Had he not seen us both, and chosen me ?
And still, the irksome vow which he had made,
The secret purpose of his soul delayed.

Short was the struggle in his altered mind —
Where error comes, guilt lags not long behind.
One eve he met me in my Father's hall,
And stabbed me to the heart — that was not all —
Even this I had survived—but—mark their art!
Julia, my sister—she—had barbed the dart!
Yet long I lingered — but at length I died,
And here was brought—'tis here the dead reside.”

If, at that moment, Julia, to thy breast
A poisoned dagger had indeed been pressed,
Thou would'st have bared it, to relieve the smart,
The pang which conscience pointed to thy heart.
But soon a devious train of altered thought,
The wandering fancy of the maniac caught,
And, all unconscious of her sister's pain,
She thus resumed her incoherent strain :—

“ Didst thou not see the gems which I returned,
Because my wrists they galled, my brow they burned?
Now, mark me well—but stoop and come more near,
Spectres glide round—I would not *they* should hear!
They were not rubies, those—nay, do not start!
But drops of blood, warm gushing from my heart.
Those bracelets were not pearls—(I pray be calm!)
But tears that fell upon my upraised arm,

When o'er my weeping eyes my hand I drew,
To hide those sad tears from my mother's view.
They trickled down, and petrified, and glazed—
'Tis true—although you start, and look amazed ;
And Desmond gathered them, and set in gold—
Oh ! then they sparkled, beauteous to behold !
And ' Wear, for *my* sake, this (he said), and this,'
And sealed the token with a lover's kiss.
But all was mockery—for 'twas he, you know,
First taught that blood to gush, those tears to flow;
And therefore, I returned them, as I said,
And *he* still has them—if he is not dead ;
But do not wear them, if he gives them you,
Your heart will ache as mine did, if you do.

" My heart *does* ache," the wretched Julia cried ;
" My heart does ache indeed—oh ! I am tried
Beyond my power to bear—just God forgive !
This is too much to suffer, and to live."

But here the weeping mother interposed,
And sought this scene of sorrow to have closed.
" Julia, my only comfort ! kill me not—
Oh leave, in pity leave, this fatal spot.
Haste, thou last solace left me—fly, though loth —
In mercy fly—nor let me lose ye both !"

And Julia raised her, as her mother bid,
And on her breast her burning forehead hid ;
But now the depth of anguish she displayed
Roused to strange sympathy the frenzied maid.
“ Ha ! weep’st thou ! ” she exclaimed with frantic laugh,
“ Haste ! bring a cup, our mingling tears to quaff.
I’ll pledge thee in the bowl with dance and song—
Tears have been Laura’s bitter beverage long ! ”

“ All just avenger ! ” (Julia could no more)
“ When shall *her* sufferings, when shall *mine* be o’er ?
Oh ! let my deep repentance purchase peace—
Or bid my being and my sorrows cease ! ”

The maniac watched her with a vacant stare,
And strove to catch the meaning of her prayer ;
Then with clasped hands she bowed her by her side,
And “ Hear her, gracious Heaven ! ” she softly cried.
And then uprose with wild disastrous glee,
And strove to drag her sister from her knee.
Then, with a sudden calmness in her mien,
Where mingled pity and regret were seen—
“ You looked so like my once loved Julia, there,
My inmost soul responded to your prayer ! ”

“ Thanks, injured saint ! ” the contrite mourner cried,
And clasped the unconscious maniac to her side ;

“That prayer, although ’twas offered up by me,
Will rise to heaven, since sanctified by thee !
Dost thou remember, love, those happy days
When we had nought to pray for—all was praise ?
When rose, each sweet succeeding evening gone,
The hearts of both upon the lips of one ?
Now—all that blest communion past away—
Thou canst not—and *I*—scarcely *dare* to pray !
Oh ! why in those dear hours of early bliss,
In mercy spared a misery like this,
Gave not kind heaven, to save thee such a doom,
The peaceful refuge of an early tomb ?
Why rather slept not I there ? there laid low,
Ere blasted by this sight of matchless woe,
Griefs ne’er had been, which now must never cease —
But thou been Desmond’s bride — and I—at peace !”

“ Desmond !” the mourner said, “ dost thou too
know,

“ Hast thou too loved, the author of my woe ?
But hark, sweet maid ! if thence proceeds thy grief,
I have a talisman to bring relief.
Yes ! when most wretched, still I gaze on this,
And feel a remnant of my former bliss !”

While thus she spoke, she from her bosom drew,
The casket she had there concealed from view ;

“ See ! ” she continued, “ raise that drooping brow ”—
She pressed her trembling hand, and Julia now
Compelled her pained attention to afford,
Looked—and beheld, the picture of her lord !
Then, wildly shrieking, sunk upon the earth,
And mourned the bitter hour that gave her birth ;
Mourned in her mother’s hearing—for despair
Is wrapt in self, and owns no other care.

The keeper came—impatient of their stay—
Oh what a scene his wondering eyes survey !
One, drowned in grief and grovelling on the earth—
One, gibbering words of wild fantastic mirth :
Yet, such the power of beauty, both so fair,
They lent a charm to madness, and despair !
The mother too ! but who can hope to show
Her as she stood—the climax of their woe ?
They who have felt such pangs perhaps can guess—
They who have not—oh ! how can they express ?

Still hushed and mute the gazing keeper stood —
Charmed to a softness foreign to his mood.
If they who trade in misery, could weep,
He then had wept—all sternness lulled to sleep !
Unnoticed by the mourners he had come,
For grief is blind and deaf, no less than dumb.

'Twas Laura first his near approach espied—
With quivering lip, and eyes dilated wide,
All checked she stood, amid her mirth's career,
And pale at once with anger and with fear ;
Then, round her mother's neck her arms she flung,
And wilder words fell faltering from her tongue.

“ Ha ! 'tis the spectre-fiend—avaunt ! avaunt !
Still must that hideous form my footsteps haunt ?
But here is one—a child of heavenly light—
Shall bid thee vanish from my blasted sight :
Rise, lady, rise ! and bid yon fiend depart,
Who fain would seek to tear thee from my heart.
Ha ! 'tis too true—he beckons thee away—
And would'st thou leave me ? stay, in mercy stay !”

“ I will not leave thee !” Julia madly cried—
“ I'll stay, though 'twere to perish by thy side !”

“ Forbear, my child ! I pray thee to be calm—
Thy frantic gestures fill her with alarm.
More tranquil, both will meet a future day,
When these first pangs of grief are passed away.”

“ Shall I indeed return ? then be it so !
But yet one sad embrace, before I go !”

She rose—but ere her sister she could gain,
Sunk down, exhausted by internal pain.
A prey to self-reproach—her feelings keen—
Had sunk beneath the horrors of the scene.
It was too much for nature to sustain,
The pangs which wrung her heart and racked her brain.

They raised, and bore the unconscious Julia thence,
Still lost to life, and, happily, to sense—
While sunk the maniac back, with piercing cry,
And wept till 'wilder'd fancy knew not why!



END OF CANTO VI.

CANTO VII.

THE CONCLUSION.

I will frame for myself (said I) a destiny that shall be fixed — uniform — equally inaccessible to pleasure as to pain ; the days which heaven has allotted me shall be solely filled with my duties.

Delphine, MADAME DE STAEL.

THEY bore the young bride to her Father's hall,
 And strove, her scattered senses to recall ;
 But strove in vain, — back with returning life
 Ebb'd all the anguish of that mental strife.
 Soon, fever flushed her cheek, and fired her veins —
 She raved of maniacs, bedlams, stripes, and chains.
 And even when restored to calmer state,
 Life seemed to hover on the verge of fate.
 Beside her weeps her mother — and in vain
 Summons each aid, art ministers to pain.

Alas the impotence of *human* art !
Can med'cine heal a malady of heart ?
They sent for Desmond — and he hastened there —
Oh painful summons ! scene of deep despair !
Ye who such meetings have beheld or borne,
Mourn for the husband, for the parents mourn !
Yet oh ! if sympathy could soften grief
Deep as it was, e'en theirs had found relief.
For who that knew the beings they deplored,
But felt, such loss could never be restored ?
Fathers that once with theirs alliance sought,
Not for the wealth, but virtues which they brought —
Mothers, that erst in secret envied theirs,
Or asked of heaven, such daughters, in their prayers—
All joined to mourn the parents' hopes o'erthrown,
And half bewailed their sorrows as their own.

How vain each airy fabric, mortals build !
How treacherous all their hopes, though e'en fulfilled !

A few months since, these hailed the bridal feast,
And they who graced it then, *appeared* at least
In all the glow of youth's and beauty's pride —
The blooming virgin, and the blushing bride.
Now, stretched on ~~flower's~~ and on frenzy's bed,
One dying, and the other — “ worse than dead ! ”

And wept the parents — they had cause to weep !
The dart which pierced their souls had stricken deep ;
These were their care, their joy, their crown, their
grace —

The polished pillars that upheld their race ;
And, with the beauteous ruins buried deep,
The fallen fabric of their hopes must sleep.

And long by Julia's side they sat and wept —
Soothed when she woke, and watched her when she slept.
While nought except her scarcely heaving breath,
Proved, that pale sleep was not the sleep of death.

But storms that firmest manhood might subdue
Woman's elastic frame oft struggles through.
She, like the willow, bends before the blast,
But rises when its wrath is overpast.
He wrestles with the storm, till grief or pain
Stretch him a lifeless victim on the plain.

Thus, not the strength, but weakness, of her frame
The force of Julia's fever overcame.
Yet had the storm of terror, grief, remorse,
Swept o'er that frame with desolating force,
And in her meagre form, and altered face
Long, long they left their record and their trace.

* * * * *



Time, who, at once is misery's cause and cure,
The wounds he makes, still teaches to endure ;
And he — when many a weary month was past,
Relenting heard a parent's prayer at last,
And gave the maniac to her mother's arms
In all the touching grace of faded charms ;
Faded by grief, not age — in early youth
Too soon she tasted of the cup of truth ;
Truth, that sad power who rends the veil away —
The rainbow radiance of our early day,
Strips from life's clouds the sunshine fancy shed,
And leaves enduring darkness in its stead.

At our first entrance into life, we make
Each in our turn, a radical mistake.
Fondly we dream that *here* we shall be blest —
Here fix our anchor — *here* set up our rest.
To hope, not reason, we resign the rein,
And, still deceived, believe and hope again.
And does not then th' example, hourly shown,
Of others' failures, warn us of our own ?
No ! theirs we mark, but still believe that *we*
A bright exception to the rule shall be ;
Each disappointment is a new surprise,
And time must tear the bandage from our eyes.
That hour arrives at length — fled one by one,
The fairy visions of our youth are gone.

Robbed of their earthly hopes, the virtuous fly
To higher aims, and aid beyond the sky —
Aids which the proud despise, the vicious spurn,
And feel a foretaste of the doom they earn.
Laura ! the wiser part 'twas thine to choose,
Nor with thy present bliss, thy future lose.
Though life, to thee, had lost its sovereign balm,
To live for others, yet could yield a charm.
'Twas thine to seek, though with an aching breast,
And dead to bliss, to make all others blest ;
The thorny pillow of despair to smooth,
The sick to visit, and the sad to soothe

In calm employ thus many a month was spent,
With nought t' enjoy, and little to lament ;
There was a settled sadness in her grief,
That sought no soothing, sighed for no relief ;
So free from feeling's pangs, and passion's strife,
It was not *living*, but *enduring* life.

Her friends and parents sought, but sought in vain,
Back to her home to win her once again.
On that sole theme her firm resolve was fixed,
No more with them, nor with the world she mixed.
Her home ! oh how could she inhabit there,
Where all things breathed of Desmond and despair ?

Scenes which would force her, hourly to contrast
The hopeless future, with the happy past.
No ! there was torture, — madness, in the thought —
Tears to her eyes its very mention brought,
And they who marked th' effect, at length forbore
To urge her fixed determination more.

All this had Julia heard — but never yet
Since that sad meeting, had the sisters met.
Yet pined she Laura's pardon to implore,
And clasp her, trembling, to her heart once more.

'Twas at that hour, all bright with rising bloom,
When nature bursts from night's reluctant tomb,
And seems her own sweet influence to shed,
Where'er on earth her dewy footsteps tread,
That Laura, with benevolent intent,
Forth on her solitary rambles went.
When lo ! a messenger arrests her flight —
What brings he, that she shudders at the sight ?
Whose superscription fills her tearful eye,
And from her bosom draws the bitter sigh ?
'Twas Julia's hand ! hers trembled as it took
The lines on which she nerved herself to look ;
Yet fast her varying colour came and fled
As thus with quivering lip the scroll she read.

“ My sister ! — if I yet may dare to claim,
That wronged and injured yet beloved name, —
A sister’s pardon — nay, my Laura, more —
A sister’s *love* — I sue thee to restore.
And sure, if anguish can for guilt atone,
My claim to pity even thou must own.
Oh thou art well avenged ! just Heaven has heard
The prayer thy uncomplaining wrongs preferred —
The silent prayer — for well I know too meek
That gentle heart its just revenge to seek ;
But Heaven, whose holy wrath ne’er slumbers long,
Beheld indignant, and redressed thy wrong.
The sense of wildered thought, withdrawn from thee,
In tenfold vengeance poured its pangs on me ;
For what is guiltless grief’s extremest force,
Matched with the mightier tortures of remorse ?
And these were mine — but wherefore should I dwell
On the sad doom my fault deserved too well ?
Enough to tell that nought can now restore
Back to my breast the peace it owned before.
But thou, my sister, wherefore would’st thou flee
From the gay scenes that yet have charms for thee ?
And, in the very outset of thy race,
Forsake a world which thou wert formed to grace ?
Ah, no ! my Laura — deign to think once more
That brighter, better days, are yet in store,

And give a generous pardon's noblest proof,
By sealing it beneath thy sister's roof.

Oh ! by the love that linked our early youth,
When friendship's voice was yet the voice of truth ;
When, hand in hand, we tread life's flowery path,
Nor saw the tempest gathering in its wrath —
By all the proofs of love bestowed on me —
By all the bitter tears I've wept for thee —
By our linked hearts so fearfully the same,
Both felt, and both inspired, one fatal flame —
What shall I say, thy yielding heart to melt ?
Oh ! even by him for whom that flame was felt —
By the once cherished hope of happier years —
By heaven itself that witnesses my tears —
By that most awful hour when even thou
Shalt need the pardon I solicit now —
Forgive — forgive me ! *say* that you forgive,
And I shall calmly die, or sweetly live !
Fast to my quivering lips my heart shall flee,
And kiss the characters, if traced by thee."

Long days elapsed — to her, in grief of heart,
And painful struggles on her sister's part,

When, half resigned, the hopes so oft deceived,
These mournful lines in answer she received :

“ My Julia ! if the train of sorrowing thought
Roused in a brain so late delirium’s sport,
Has bade my feelings for a while forbear
With thine to mix — those feelings thou wilt spare.
Yes ! if this failing heart, and feeble hand,
Rebellious to their owner’s just demand,
Deferred the trying task from day to day —
Impute not to indifference the delay.
Thou wilt not ; — there are themes on which to dwell,
Wake pangs thy pitying thought can guess too well,—
Wring the frail heart which yet they fail to break,
And tottering reason to her centre shake.
But why to *spea*k on subjects should I shrink,
On which I vainly struggle, not to *think* ?
Can I, in *silence* find the oblivion sought,
Or, by rejecting language, shut out thought ?
Come, thou scarce renovated reason, then,
And guide my trembling hand, and prompt my pen !
You ask forgiveness — take it, it is given,
As freely as I hope for it from heaven.
You ask my love — Ah ! Julia, well you know,
Though thou the fatal cause of all this woe —
Of Laura’s madness — Desmond’s broken vow —
Myself not dearer to my soul than thou !

But ask me not to join the tasteless strife
Of cares and joys that chequer busy life ;
To me its zest is over — never more
For me shall hope revive, or rapture soar ;
To me its zest is over — heart and brain,
Steeled to all touch of pleasure, as of pain.
To me this beauteous world is all a blank,
Or gaol where reptiles crawl, and fetters clank.
E'en if I *could* oblivion's mantle cast
O'er the sad records of the painful past —
Could I unteach this aching heart to feel,
Or cure a wound I scarce can e'en conceal —
Would others too forget? and could I bear
Their mingled pity and contempt to share?
To watch the cold world sneering at my woes,
And pointing, say, ' There the love-maniac goes !
Yes ! there the poor moonstricken maid behold,
Whose flame grew warmer as her swain's grew cold.
Who, when deserted, sat her down to weep
O'er the lost heart she wanted skill to keep ;
The man who scorned her, meanly still adored,
And, even to frenzy, loved her sister's lord !'
This could I brave ? or, harder yet to bear—
Poison the homefelt peace I could not share ?
Weep o'er the very woes which I invite,
Behold thy bliss, and sicken at the sight ?

Urge me no more ! it must not—cannot be :
No !—happiness was never made for me.
Hope—that bright halo round the brow of youth,
Has fled for ever at the touch of truth,
And vain the endeavour—every effort vain,
To lure the beauteous vision back again.

“ Yet Heaven, perhaps, in mercy, not in wrath,
Has strewed with thorns life’s too delusive path,
And fain would win a soul, fast bound to earth,
Back to the glorious realms that gave it birth.
Ah ! leave me then to dedicate the days
It yet bestows, to penitence and praise ;
And when at last it sends the wished release,
That bids my being and my sorrows cease—
When these sad eyes, eternal tears that shed,
Shall sleep the lasting slumber of the dead,
And thou, surrounded by a blooming race,
Bright in thy sons thy Desmond’s form shalt trace,
While other Julias emulate thy face—
Then lead thy daughters to the lonely spot
Where Laura sleeps—by all save thee forgot,—
There, as they kneel my grass-grown bed beside,
Do thou, all glowing with a mother’s pride,
Shed yet for me some sympathising tears,
And with a mother’s transport mix her fears ;

Warn them, as lasting peace they hope to know,
To shun the doom of her who rests below ;
Teach them their yet untainted hearts to steel
To all the agonies that love must feel,
To fly th' insidious foe no force withstands,
Nor give their hearts till fate has linked their hands.
" Desmond ! to thee, one word ere yet I close
This record of my weakness and my woes,
Twice have I heard thee say—and on my ear
Yet dwell the sounds I shuddered then to hear—
Sounds, which still add resentment to regret—
' Laura ! farewell ! forgive me—and forget !'
And didst thou think that I could copy thee ?
Thus didst thou deem of woman, and of me ?
Oh ! 'twas of all thy deeds the foulest blot,
And *not* to be forgiven or forgot !
I loved thee once as few have ever loved—
How well—my frenzy, my despair, have proved.
Yet think not that I weep my life away,
A guilty passion's unresisting prey.—
No ! though my dream of bliss I still regret,
I long have ceased to love thee—but forget !
Folly may roam, and fickle man may range,
But know, a heart like mine can never change !
Forget thee ! when the stroke of time or pain,
Hath banished *all* remembrance from my brain,—

When these worn eyes that weep my bitter lot,
Sleep in the grave, where *all* things are forgot—
When peace is found on earth, or faith in men,
Oh ! then I may forget—but not till then !”

END OF CANTO VII.

ODE TO BEAUTY.

1.

HAIL ! magic power ! that sitt'st enthroned
Fairest in the human face,
Thou polar star, that shedd'st around
Beams that warm and rays that grace.

2.

In man, majestic, awful, thou —
Winning, in childhood's wiles —
Bewitching on soft woman's brow,
All-conquering in her smiles.

3.

The magnet thou of every eye,
The queen of every heart ;
Thy task, to prompt love's sharpest sigh,
Yet wreath with flowers the dart.

4.

The muse, that bids the poet soar —
The grace, that painters feign —
The idol, even priests adore,
Nor deem their praise profane :

5.

Humble to thee the haughty proud —
Thy slaves the brave and free —
And kings to whom the world has bowed
Themselves have bowed to thee. "

6

Ere first around the new-made sun
Rolled each attendant earth,
Or Time had yet his course begun,
Had Beauty sprung to birth.

7.

As rose beneath the Maker's hand
The lovely frame we see,
Angels adored the work He planned,
And worshipped Him in thee.

8.

O'er all the lovely scenes of day
He bade thee shed thy light,
And sparkle in each starry ray
That gems the robe of night.

9.

Sublime o'er ocean's world of waves
In stormy pomp to ride,
Or softly smile when earth he laves
With scarcely murmuring tide.

10.

Along the rainbow's wat'ry arch
In matchless hues to glow ;
And in the sun's majestic march,
Shed life on all below.

11.

He bade thee paint the peacock's train —
The zebra's pencilled side —
Wave in the courser's flowing mane —
And gild the insect's pride.

12.

He pierced the gloomy depths of earth,
And bade thee sparkle there,
Ere dragged in blazing gold to birth,
Or jewels bright and rare.

13.

But most, on man, the lord of all,
The new creation's king,
He bade thee, ere his fatal fall,
Thy gathered glories fling.

14.

Can thought conceive how bright and warm
In *him* thy beams expand?
Or glowed in woman's fairer form
Fresh from her Maker's hand!

15.

And now, though fallen, sunk, subdued,
We still in many a face
Th' original, as once endued,
And glorious Artist, trace.

16.

Yes, Nature sometimes proudly deigns
To show what she can do —
And frail humanity's remains
The angel lightens through!

17.

Mysterious! that a feature's form —
'The tincture of a skin' —
Expression's wond'rous power can warm,
And paint the soul within.

18.

And sad that aught so fair, should be
So fleeting and so frail!
E'en while we gaze the graces flee
The damask cheek turns pale.

19.

For not alone the touch of Time
Proclaims him for thy foe —
Disease assails thee in thy prime,
And blasts thee at a blow.

20.

And Care, more fierce than fell disease —
Than Time himself more stern —
Delights, thy rosy wreath to seize,
To bind his broken urn.

21.

E'en Love, which lightens up thy charms,
And gives thy cheek to glow,
Oft, withering in his wild alarms
Beholds his work laid low.

22.

But though too short thy tyrant reign,
'Tis boundless while it lasts ;
No victor binds with such a chain
As beauty round us casts.

23.

Chains fetter limbs, but boast no art
O'er *minds* to bear control —
But beauty binds the willing heart,
And subjugates the *soul*.

24.

Are there who deem too warm my lays ?
Thy weapons all too weak ?
To history's pages I appeal —
Let *her* thy triumphs speak.

25.

For thee a conqueror lost the world —¹³
Thy treacherous smiles betrayed ;
From fortune, fame, existence, hurled —
His loss thy tears repaid.

26.

And he, the wisest of mankind,
The lord of Judah's throne,
Heaven's brightest, loftiest, gifts resigned,
Thy loftier sway to own.

27.

When nations fled, *thou* couldst disarm
Manoah's mighty son ;
The secret of his death-fraught charm
A woman's wiles have won.

28.

His foes have found a mightier spell —
A spell that smiles and mocks —
On beauty's rosy lips to dwell,
Than on his heav'n-charmed locks.

29.

And he, imprisoned, powerless, blind —
Beloved of heaven no more —
Must weep — to late remorse resigned —
A spirit blind before.

30.

Nor less in days of later date —
All strong to blight or save —
Has beauty barbed the dart of fate,
Or healed the wounds it gave.

31.

A talisman, that, rightly used,
Bliss, honour, fame, bestows —
A dire enchantment when abused
That works uncounted woes.

32.

Ill fated Mary ! heaven, in thee,
Showed to the awe-struck earth,
How vain the envied gifts may be
Of beauty and of birth.

33.

Still truth, to others' crimes so warm,
To thine too fondly blind,
Forgets, in dreaming of thy form,
The errors of thy mind.

34.

For who that looks on beauty's eye —
That mirror of delight,
Deems vice or folly lurking nigh
To cloud a beam so bright ?

35.

Yet, wandering oft from virtue's sphere,
On vice descend thy rays,
As round corruption's forms of fear
The brilliant phosphor plays.

36.

Yet, though too oft, amidst her folds,
Entwined by serpent sin,
As oft the lovely casket holds
A lovelier gem within.

37.

A Lucrece thine ! the matchless dame,
The theme of latest time,
Who wreaked upon her guiltless shame
The vengeance due to crime.

38.

Thine too the chaste Penelope,
Whose proud and well-earned praise
For years of changeless constancy,
Lives yet in Homer's lays.

39.

And England boasts her *every* fair
As bright in soul as looks ;
But fame, which praises worth when rare,
When common, overlooks.

40.

And names forgot, as soon as praised,
Oblivion here shall shroud,
To which, in Greece, had altars blazed
And worshippers had bowed.

41.

A Grey, to whom Heaven's ruling power,
Not in its wrath but love,
Gave, for the empire of an hour,
An endless crown above ; —

42.

An Askew ours ! ¹³ who dared the doom
Assigned her by a tyrant's rage,
Resigning, for a fiery tomb,
Life in its loveliest stage ;

43.

Who, firm to friendship's sacred sway
When racks and tortures wrung,
Not death's worst terrors could betray
Its secrets from her tongue.

44.

Around her name let laurels bloom,
By bards be incense thrown —
The bays they scatter o'er *her* tomb,
Shall flourish round their own.

45.

Nor here be Boleyn's charms past by,
Since superstition's train
Fled from the lightning of her eye,
And beauty broke his chain.

46.

Nor only — sweet enchantress ! blow
The *myrtles* round thy brow ;
To thee the arts their *laurel* owe —
Their lovely author, thou !

47.

Parent of poesy ! inspired
By thee thy Sappho sung,
And every melting bosom fired,
Save *his*, her own who wrung.

48.

And he, the bard of eldest days,
When Helen was his theme,
(Though old and blind,) his magic lays
Glowed with a brighter gleam.

49.

Petrarch ! whom time has all too late
Linked with his Laura's name,
Though severed by relentless fate,
For ever joined by fame.

50.

And has no bard of Albion's isle,
A suppliant at thy shrine,
His muse thy charms, his meed thy smile —
Entwined his wreath with thine ?

51.

Yes, round his Sacharissa's name,
What spells has Waller thrown !
And made the haughty fair one's fame
Coeval with his own.

52.

And Burns, to Mary and to worth
So pure a flame had given,
He loved the beauteous maid on earth,
And sung the saint in heaven. ¹⁴

53.

And he, the bard we boast of now,
Yet blush for him the while,
Has bade his brilliant lyre avow
The beauties of our isle.

54.

Yes, he who every grace and charm
Of every clime had seen,
Gave to a British maid the palm, ¹⁸
And crowned her beauty's queen.

55.

Then still on this most favoured land,
Bright goddess, shed thy beams,
And, linked with virtue hand in hand,
Exalt the poet's dreams.

ODE TO WEALTH.

A Modern Allegro.

HENCE, ruthless Poverty !
 Parent of chilling Want and pale Despair !
 Fly, with all thy ghastly train,
 Hunger gaunt, and writhing Pain,
 And pining anxious Thought, and withering Care.
 Hide thee in deserted halls,
 Or some lone cottage mud-built walls,
 Where light looks in through time-worn chinks
 On sights from which e'en Fancy shrinks,
 And shuddering turns away, and makes to Wealth
 her prayer.

Come, thou goddess worshipped long,
 But yet by mortal bard unsung ;
 Eldest born of Chance and Care,
 Hear, oh hear, thy votary's prayer !

Come, in garb of woven gold —
Though wrinkled thou shouldst be and old,
The magic purse which thou dost bear
Shall make thee young, shall make the fair ;
Though bent, or hobbling in thy pace,
This, this shall turn each step to grace.
Decked with diamonds from the mine,
Where Poverty dooms slaves to pine,
Come ! and shield me from the woes
That Poverty on slaves bestows ;
Thine is Freedom, light as air,
Chains are hers, and toil and care.
At thy right hand Power advances,
Frolic Pleasure round thee dances ;
All *earthly* bliss for which we live,
'Tis thine to have, and thine to give.
Goddess, come ! and lead with thee
Heaven commended Charity !
Still be my liberal hand held forth,
To soothe distress and succour worth ;
But banish Pride's inflated band —
With Meanness still linked hand in hand.
Lead me thou to stately halls,
Where breathing pictures deck the walls,
And magic sculpture, skilled to warm
With heavenly grace the human form.

Oft through gardens let me stray
That sloping woo the noontide ray,
Where from its mossy stalk the rose
Around delicious odour throws ;
Where the bee delights to toil,
And revel in the fragrant spoil ;
Where mazy walks, and alleys green,
And groves of verdure deck the scene,
And Nature blooms, at Art's command,
A paradise along the land.
Bowers of delicious coolness, there,
Shield me from the sultry air,
Wave your dark foliage o'er my head,
And round, delightful languor shed :
That dulcet calm, of all below
The nearest heavenly bliss we know.
My glance, as here the sun mounts high,
O'er the far-spreading view shall fly,
Till rests at last the roving eye,
Where, close below, a river glides,
And freshness sports along its tides.

Say, ought I, fanned in such a shade,
To envy then the harvest maid,
Who feels upon her throbbing brow,
The sun's meridian fervours glow,

Exhausted gains her hut of clay,
And wakes to toil with waking day?—

'Tis said that all-inspiring Health,
Flees ever from the couch of Wealth,
And deigns her sacred influence shed
Alone upon the peasant's head.
But does experience teach us this?
Does Poverty herself confess
That she alone, of all below,
Feels health in every fibre glow?
No! at the poor man's tortured bed,
Which toil and bitter want have spread,
Go, learn of each unpitied groan
That pain was felt ere gold was known.
Round him his clamorous children stand,
To crave their pittance from his hand,
That hand, by penury relaxed,
For scanty life too steenly taxed.
He bids the famished train devour
What yet might cheer each wasted power,
While seeks that cheerless life the grave,
Which asked but needful wealth to save.
The voice of that afflicted cot
Shall bid thee bless thy happier lot,
And own that e'en though sickness frown,
Wealth tips the barbed dart with down.

Goddess ! thy gifts may be misused,
And all thy means of bliss abused,
Intemperance may court disease,
And pleasure's round may cease to please.
But let not him who casts away
The pearls that in his path may lay,
Dare *thy* too lavish hand upbraid
For wretchedness himself has made.
Earth nought of bounteous can produce,
But folly will pervert its use.
What though the moon, when heaven she climbs,
Oft lights a villain to his crimes,
Is it that blessed orb we blame ?
No ! with the sinner rests the shame.

Oh Poverty ! be thou my fate,
And the worst ills that on thee wait,
If e'er I raise my truant voice
To call thee, though in jest, my choice !
Does Virtue shoot her trembling rays ?
Thy hand extinguishes the blaze.
Does Genius fire the peasant's soul ?
It withers at thy stern controul ;
Or if it bursts its kindling way,
As rends the cloud the lightning's ray,
Ah ! how shall he, whose soul refined,
Has roamed the raptured heights of mind,

Descend from genius' lofty ken,
To herd him with his *fellow-men* ?
If courted in his humble sphere,
By those to fame and fortune dear,
What double wretchedness shall wait
The contrast of his adverse fate !
To see delights he must not share—
His evil with *their good* compare—
And from the castle's splendid walls,
And its gay mirth-resounding halls,
Back to his straw-built shed to steal,
And feel—as only *bards* can feel !¹⁶

“ But Love may light the peasant's hours,
“ And strew his toilsome path with flowers ? ”
Ah ! though in palaces forgot,
Yet do not seek him in the cot.
There, if the wanderer chance to stray,
He's scared by poverty away.
Wretched ourselves, 'twill still be found
We make *all* wretchedness, around.
The peasant, when with cares opprest,
Hides not his sorrows in his breast ;
Untaught to feel, unmoved to spare,
Kindness and love are banished there.

Goddess ! whom, though worshipped long,
Never poet yet has sung,

To me be all thy treasures shown,
And lead me to thy gem-built throne.
There, Poesy shall soothe my hours,
And Music wake with all her powers.
Oft will I pore upon the line,
Where Genius sets his seal divine,
And oft with circling friends will meet,
Making solitude more sweet ;
While care and anguish flee away
From my life's unclouded ray.

These delights, if these are thine,
Make them, Wealth ! oh make them mine !



THE MAID OF DAHOMY.

A Ballad.

The following story is taken, without other alteration than that of being versified, from an affecting account of the adventures of a daughter of Mr. Abson, late governor of William's Fort, in the kingdom of Dahomy, as related in an interesting little work called "A Voyage to Africa, with some Account of the Manners and Customs of the Dahomian People; by John M'Leod."

MY Father, in his spring of life,
 From Albion's isle was doomed to roam,
 To call a tropic maiden wife,
 A tropic land his home.

There, far from his blest native isle,
 To grace his lonely bower,
 Three sons amid his desert smile,
 And one fair female flower.

"Rose of the desert!" oft in sport
 He'd say, as on the nymph he smiled,
 "Not all the maids of England's court,
 Could match thy graces wild."

And oft he'd fill her wondering ear
With tales of that dear clime,
Which still the sylvan nymph, to hear,
Forgot the foot of time.

Though born beneath the eye of fire
That sears Dahomy's sandy plains,
Her pride was still a free-born sire
Amidst a land of chains.

Yes, I was proud ! but sorrow came,
And quenched my glowing youth in gloom,
And culled my fond sire's desert flower
To wither in its bloom.

Dahomy's despot king beheld,
And wooed me for his bride ;
But all my father's blood rebelled,
And all his daughter's pride.

What ! should a Briton's child be given,
To crown a wild barbarian's flame ?
His darling maid ? forbid it Heaven !
Forbid it England's name !

But soon each gay returning smile
Was chased by new alarms ; —
My father sickened for a while,
Then died within my arms.

And would that fatal day had seen
His daughter perish too,
When o'er his corse, with maddening mien,
This fainting form I threw !

A stranger raised me from the ground,
And whispered words of peace ;
And balm in those soft tones I found
That bade my sorrows cease.

I raised my eyes — a stranger ! no ; —
I long had known his worth —
They breathed a balm for deepest woe,
Those accents of the north.

From England's much-loved isle he came ; —
To be my father's honoured guest,
He did not need a stronger claim,
Yet many he possessed.

When fevered by the burning ray —
The ordeal of our tropic shore —
Trembling, I watched him, night and day,
And felt each pain he bore.

Now, in the wide world left alone,
When I too needed aid,
Each soothing care that I had shown
His gratitude repaid.

He led me thence with gentle hand,
And promised o'er and o'er,
To bear me from this desert land
To distant England's shore.

But fate forbade — one weary night,
To soothe my sleeplessness I strayed,
Through golden groves that dread no blight,
And bowers of myrtle shade.

For there my father slept — and I
Sought the rais'd sod that wrapped his bier,
To breathe one last fond filial sigh,
And shed one parting tear.

Ah ! why, unthinking, did I stray,
Without my faithful slaves' defence —
My guardian brother far away,
And kind protector hence ?

Sudden, before my startled eye
A savage train appear—
I shrieked—I fled—and fast *they* fly
Whose feet are winged by fear.

But faster still the fiend-like troop
Pursued their panting prey—
Breathless I heard their savage whoop,
And fell like senseless clay.

And did I wake from that dread swoon ?
And did those death-like shadows flit ?
I woke, alas ! to wail, too soon,
I life I could not quit.

Why, death-like shadows did ye fly,
And give my wild despair
To meet a tyrant's lurid eye,
And lingering durance bear ?

Yet e'en before his throne of pride,
My spirit scorned to bend or sue,—
Amazed, he saw his power defied,
And raged—but trembled too !

The wrath he could not have subdued
He did not dare to brave,
But left me to my solitude,
His captive, not his slave.

Since then, my life's unvaried tale
Breathes but one weary tone of woe,
That bids despair my heart assail,
And burning tears to flow.

But soon these weeping eyes shall close,
And soon this weary heart shall rest,
And earth, that witnesses my woes,
Shall hide them in her breast.

Tyrant, approach ! one boon I crave—
(E'en tyrants war not with the dead)
To soothe the life thou would'st not save,
And dry the tears I've shed.

Deep in yon fatal orange grove,
Beneath a tamarind's shade,
My father sleeps—if tears can move,
There too let me be laid.

I ask not poisoned cup or steel
To haste the doom I crave—
I need but feel as now I feel,
To quickly share his grave.

And thou, dear Youth ! where'er thou art,
Some tears perchance wilt shed—
Tears gushing from a pitying heart
T'embalm my narrow bed.

Though o'er the lone spot where I lie,
Be heard no wailings loud ;
'Twere joy to think one heart would sigh,
And *that* were thine, M'Cleod !

But wheresoe'er my tomb is piled,
My soul at least is free ;
Shade of my sire, receive thy child !
Thy daughter comes to thee !

CLASSICAL SONNET,
 WRITTEN IN A YOUNG LADY'S ALBUM.

MOTTO COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION.

What shall I write ? I've hit upon it !
 Dulness—thy very name is Sonnet !

You bid me write—I will—but then
 I want a subject for my pen.
 Ode, epic, elegy, or rebus,—
 'Tis all the same to me, sweet Phœbus !
 Alas ! my muse is on the rack,
 And cruel Phœbus turns his back.
 My ink is good, my paper fair,
 My pens are pruned with toil and care—
 But oh ! in pen and ink's despite,
 Without a theme I cannot write ;
 And when Apollo's in the dumps,
 Pens may be mended to the stumps,

Before a single line he'll send
A hapless follower to befriend.
But though *one* god is in the pet,
All have not left Olympus yet.
He will not deign to help me through,
So let us see what *they* can do ?
And lest my muse should lose her way
(Unguided by the God of Day,)
I'll chain her down with fourteen fetters,
And scrawl a sonnet—like my betters.

ENTER SONNET.

One line from Cupid I will claim,
One from the laughter-loving dame,
(For Cupid o'er thy cradle flew,
And Venus smiled, fair girl, on you,)
The Graces three, and Muses nine,
Must send me each a single line.
And now behold my sonnet made
Without Apollo's needless aid.
For if my idle rhymes you count,
You'll find—fourteen is just the amount ;
And I will thank each drowsy god
Whose help has made my readers nod,
From one dear nymph if they beguile
The seal and sanction of a smile.

ON THE PORTRAIT OF A BEAUTY.

“ Alike, but oh ! how different.”

THESE are her eyes—but where's the lambent gleam
 That melts the iciest bosom in its beam ?
 These are her ruby lips—but where's the smile
 That might e'en misery's self to mirth beguile ?
 Her dimpled cheek is here—but where's the blush
 That wakes to richer tints its rosy flush ?
 Here every feature to the life we find—
 What does the picture want ?—it wants the mind !*
 The outward form is perfect—but the *soul*,
 That casts it crowning glories o'er the whole,

* Say what does Chloe want ?—she wants a soul.

POPE.

The nameless charm, that, as we chase it, flies,
Now paints the cheek, now sparkles in the eyes,
We find not here—and wonder as we gaze,
In what consists the want which it betrays —
Coldly the bright original confess,
And marvel that the copy charms us less.
Yet blush not, painter! thou hast done thy part,
The fault is not in thee, nor in thine art.
All, all is here its baffled skill can teach—
The real portrait is beyond its reach.
Yet is that portrait's true perfection traced
On tablets whence it cannot be effaced.
Thou who hast seen her, yet canst question *where*,
Go gaze within, and thou shalt find it there,
Graved by the hand of nature, not of art,
And traced by memory's pencil on the heart !

STANZAS,

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM, (AT AN EARLY AGE,) ON
BEING ASKED FOR SOME ORIGINAL LINES.

AH ! deem not that to me belong
The powers which gifted poets know ; —
It is not mine to wake the song,
Or bid the measured numbers flow.

If e'er, in childhood's playful hour,
The sportive wreath I twined,
Or soothed, beneath its galling power,
A soul to grief resigned,—

That time is past ! within this heart
There lurks no wish for praise,
And even friendship's winning art
Must fail to fan the blaze.


Yet well — if such a gift were mine —
The lay might friendship claim,
Since moments offered at its shrine,
Are worth an age of fame !

But 'twill not be ! the potent spell
Is not bestowed on me,
That bids the soul with anguish swell,
Or thrill with ecstasy !

The lyre is shivered in my hand,
That erst the careless ear could gain —
No grief so deep, no joy so bland,
To wake its chords again !

But livelier tones it should produce,
To answer the demand you made,
Since, e'en in pleading my excuse,
Obedience still is paid.

'Tis o'er ! but though the sounds are past,
Less brief be friendship's reign ;
If these have served to bind it fast,
They are not breathed in vain.



LINES,

WRITTEN IN A BLANK PAGE OF A LIFE OF WALLER.

WIT ! canst thou shield the traitor, coward, liar ?
Is meanness' self revered if thou inspire ?
Yet happier he, who, true to honour's race,
Trusts to no sparkling thoughts to ward disgrace ;
Whose actions scorn to need his tongue's defence,
Nor call on wit to dim the eyes of sense.
Happiest of all, in whom are both combined ;
All the heart's worth with playful humour joined.
He, when through tangled paths condemned to stray,
Where danger crosses virtue on her way,
He calls, oh wit, thy all persuasive force,
To chain the hands that check her in her course.
Won by thy suasive words, hate drops her sword,
And justice yields — not pardon, but reward.

ENIGMA.

How strange a paradox my fate is found !
To freedom born, I yet full oft am bound ;
Deaf — yet the melody of praise I seek ;
Dumb — yet a thousand languages I speak !
In my own merits though alone I'm great,
Obsequious pages on my footsteps wait.
My wealth is ne'er enjoyed until transferred,
And voice I give, though mine is never heard.
For me, the pencil's bright creations rise ;
Blind though I be, I feast all other eyes.
To me the labours of the bard belong,
That charm the world with witchery of song.
The pealing organ and the warbling lute,
Without my aid, were dissonant or mute.
Soldiers themselves will to my columns flee —
E'en reverend chapters find repose with me.

I spring, like Pallas, from my parent's brain,
And, born of mind, o'er mind I hold my reign.
How shall I add (since saints have owned my worth,)
From fiends — aye demons — I derive my birth,
Who stamped their own dark character of yore,
Where all was spotless purity before !
Oft have I writhed — though few revile it less —
Beneath th' envenomed fury of the press ;
And like the sibyl's oracles of old,
On leaves are all my mysteries enrolled.

Friends of my choice ! who from a vain world flee
To wander forth with wisdom and with me ;
Who oft at midnight gloom, or twilight grey,
Have sought my converse, or confessed my sway —
I leave this mental labyrinth to you —
Who best have loved me, first will find the clue !

THE MANIA OF THE DAY,

OR

An Eulogy on Albums.

In this world, which for ever is changing its fashion,
Attentive observers may see
There is always some *one* reigning mania or passion
To which the fair sex bow the knee.

'Tis sometimes the rage to learn Latin and Greek—
And straight the young misses are set
To puzzle their brains, which before were but weak,
And catch hearts in a classical net.

Then the travelling-mania perchance is the next,
And to far distant lands they must haste.
To be by their language and manners perplexed,
And their time and their money to waste ;

To be cooped up in inns that are worse than a sty,
And poisoned with soups and ragouts ;
'Till from frogs and French guides in a fury they fly,
While *they* pocket th' affront — and the *sous*.

Then seal-boxes next are the *ton* and the trade,
And to sealing the sweet creatures go,
As keen as if every impression they made
Were to be on the heart of a beau.

From the bee's waxen store then they model fair flowers
(Their own lovely emblems are they !)
'Till Flora might think they had rifled her bowers,
Or envy the skill they display.

But lo ! 'tis the Album that now is the rage,
And the Muses and Graces are taught
Their signet to set on its magical page,
And keep in its precincts their court.

Here the lover may hint in ambiguous verse
What he dares not relate in plain prose,
And significant lines on the *lady* rehearse,
Though perhaps they are—"under, THE ROSE."

Short flights may the poet and painter try here,
And *creep* ere they venture to *go*—
Secure that no critic will dare interfere .
With so fair and so gentle a foe.

Then long may the dear Album-mania last !
Heaven knows what the next one may be,
But of all that are present, and all that are past,
The mania of Albums for me !

THE LIKENESS OF LOVE.

A LADY to a painter came —
Young and lovely was the dame ;
“ Paint me Love,” she blushing said ;
Smiled the artist, and obeyed.
He drew a little cherub boy,
All mirth and frolic, smiles and joy.
A rosy wreath the urchin wore,
A quiver at his back he bore.
Blind, but Beauty guides his way,
And the Graces round him play ;
Wings he wore, but not displayed,
And more for ornament than aid.
The flow’ry dart his hand sustained,
Seem’d form’d to heal the heart it pained.

Enraptured now, the blooming maid
The lovely portraiture surveyed ;—

“The face, the form, are fair to view,
But is the likeness just and true?”
“’Tis thus, in every age,” he said,
“The God of Love has been pourtrayed.”
“What marvel then his praise is sung
By nymphs and swains—by old and young?
Oh! form, all other forms transcending,
In thine all other beauties blending,
Come, take possession of my breast,
And soothe its every care to rest!”
She praised the painter’s matchless art,
And pressed it to her lips and heart.
Oh! fatal fancy, fond and brief!
Oh! pleasure dearly bought by grief!
That heart was thenceforth doomed to pain,
Those lips—they never smiled again!

A second time the Lady came—
THE Lady?—could it be the same?
The rose that decked her cheek was dead,
The fire that lit her eye was fled.
Sighs from her tortured bosom broke,
And thus in faltering tones she spoke;—
“I come the picture to restore—
Paint me a pigmy child no more;
Paint me of gigantic size,
A monster towering to the skies.

Paint me a demon dark and foul,
With lips that writhe, and eyes that scowl,
With locks turned grey by pining care,
And forehead wrinkled by despair ;
Feeding on a human heart,
Torn from some victim of his art ;
Take from Time his swifter wing,
Dip his dart in Lethe's spring.
Take from the basilisk his eyes,"—
The Painter stopped her in surprise.
" Wherefore, Lady, should I draw
A fiend the wide world never saw ?"—
" Paint him first, and then I'll tell ;
The world ! it knows him all too well !"
The Artist wondered, but obeyed—
" This is Love !" the Lady said. "

THE DIALOGUE OF EXISTENCE.

Why start at Death ? where is he ? Death arrived
 Is past ; not come — or gone — he's never *here*.
 Ere hope, sensation fails ; black-boding man
Receives, not *suffers*, Death's tremendous blow.
 The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave,
 The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm.
 These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
 The terrors of the living, not the dead.

YOUNG.

LIFE.

HENCE, horrible phantom ! away from my sight,
 Is it Death, the destroyer, I see ?
 Hence, foe to humanity ! formed but to blight
 The flowers that are reared in her pathway by me.

DEATH.

Nay, chide not thine offspring — my parent art thou,
 But for thee I could never have been.
 If cruel thou call'st me, reveal to me how,
 And tell me in what is my tyranny seen ?

LIFE.

Thou hast stole to the cradle — where calmly reposed
An Infant, the joy and the hope of its sire
And in slumbers more lasting its sleeping eye closed,
While with it his pride and his pleasure expire.

DEATH.

And which was the favoured ? the infant that found
A harbour when scarcely embarked on the wave ?
Or the sire, to the oar of existence still bound,
Who sighs for the same peaceful haven—the grave ?

LIFE.

On the Maiden's fair cheek thou hast blighted the bloom,
Thou hast bade me for thee her young beauties to nurse,
For her bridal couch spread the cold pomp of the tomb,
And decked with the dark-waving plumes of the hearse.

DEATH.

She sleeps — the soft Maiden ! and light on her breast
Lies the grass-covered hillock that marks my domain ;
Shall we mourn that of life she but rifled the best,
Nor drained to the dregs the sure cup of its pain ?

LIFE.

From the hand of the Bard thou hast wrested the lyre,
Thou hast guided the dart to the breast of the Free,
And the Statesman, all glowing with patriot fire,
Submits to a lord and a tyrant in thee.

DEATH.

From sullyng the fame they so nobly had earned,
From the slow-wasting pangs of consuming disease,
From beholding their hopes and their projects o'erturned,
Death, the bard and the hero and patriot, frees.

LIFE.

The orphan who weeps at the tomb of his sire,
The widow, whose desolate age is forlorn,
In vain at thy hands their protector require,
In vain for the spouse and the parent they mourn.

DEATH.

If Childhood is happy when called to resign
The cup which it scarcely hath raised to its lip —
If for Manhood and Youth 'twere unmeet to repine,
When summoned away, though enraptured they sip—

How blest are the Aged ! who, sinking to rest,
When the friends of their early existence are fled,
Can quit thy vain dreams, when deprived of their zest,
And pillow on *my* peaceful bosom their head.

LIFE.

Mere sophistry all ! 'tis in vain that we strive
To quench the fond hope, or allay the cold fear ;
There beats not the breast where they will not revive,
Where Death is not dreadful, and Life is not dear.

DEATH.

Vain breath of a moment, and falsely called Life !

When beneath my cold touch thou shalt crumble to
dust, .

A better existence shall spring from the strife,

And Death prove the portal of Life to the just !

•

TO A FRIEND CONVICTED OF FLATTERY.

DID you e'er gaze through glasses whose magical tint
Reflects their own hue on each object around,
With the soft dyes of summer the landscape imprint
Or with winter's chill horrors surround ?

Through the *green*, whose gay tinge gives a glow and
a charm

Yet more bright, to the youth of the year,
Or the *gold*, thro' whose medium tho' mellow and warm,
In the autumn of age they appear ?

Through the *red*, whose rich hue gives a lustre unknown
To the brightest of seasons below,
And breathes of a glory belonging alone
To worlds unacquainted with woe ?

It is thus through the eyes of our *feelings* we see,
 Through these our impressions receive ;
 It is not the objects themselves—it is we
 Who bestow the same tints we perceive.

'Tis Sorrow that sheds the *hoar-frost* of the soul
 O'er scenes bright with summer before,
 And turns to the ice-wreaths that circle the pole
 The chaplet of flowers which she wore.

'Tis Love and 'tis Joy give the roseate hue ;
 So unlike aught that here has its birth,
 We feel 'tis a vanishing vision we view,
 A glory that is not of earth.

'Tis Friendship that casts the soft green of the heart
 O'er each barren waste it beholds—
 Delights from its own boundless stores to impart,
 In its own veil of verdure enfolds.

And through this, my dear girl, do you gaze upon me,
 It is this your affection secures,
 And I blush when I feel that far different must be
 The opinion of others from yours.

Yet say, should I seek to remove the soft veil ?

Ah no ! let it cling to me still,

For the picture is fair, though the likeness may fail,

And the theme be unworthy your skill.

My own native colours, all dull though they be,

Let others impartially view,

But may genius and worth like my friend's ever see,

Through a medium too bright to be true.

Yes, such is my wish ! tho' a vain one, I own,

Why shrink, what I feel, to confess ?

Since the praise of the good and the gifted alone

Is that which I seek to possess.

And the more when I feel that yet one fading hue,

Dearest Kate, is reserved for us both,

Through which, when with faint lips we utter adieu,

We must gaze, though reluctant and loth.

For like Autumn's last tints to the desolate heart

Is the depth of that tender regret,

Felt by friends like ourselves, who, when destined to part,

Almost grieve that they ever have met.

Yet to feel that the friend you will bear in your mind
So much brighter and better will be,
Than the real and dull one you now leave behind
Will soften your absence to me.

And long in the warmth and the kindness of youth,
May you cherish the pleasing mistake,
Turn your eyes from the dulness and tameness of truth,
Nor suffer th' enchantment to break.

NOTES.

[*.* Several notes having been added since the former sheets were printed, the numbering from 4 to 9 is incorrect; but the page is correctly indicated here.]

NOTE 1.—page 1.

“ *Not of the skies where scorching suns are glowing,*” &c.

Alluding to the somewhat *un-national* custom of our modern bards, of laying the scene of their finest poems in the East.

NOTE 2.—page 3.

The lines alluding to an illustrious Duke, with the exception of the four beginning, “ Long years have rolled away,” were written *before* he held the highest office in the state. Of course it is as a *soldier* only, that he is here mentioned; and whatever may be thought of his *political*—I presume there can be but one opinion of his *military*—career.

NOTE 3.—page 5.

“ *Worlds should not bribe it, though by peasants shared.*”

Some years ago, a brother of the author was travelling with a friend, through Wales, and chanced to dine at an obscure village inn, where they were waited upon by a disbanded soldier, apparently in the extreme of poverty. The conversation happening to turn upon military affairs, they inquired if he had been at the battle of Waterloo; he answered in the affirmative, and on their remarking that they had never examined a Waterloo medal, he

drew one from his pocket to exhibit to them. "Why, you would let us have this for half a crown," said one of the travellers, "would you not?" He smiled, and shook his head. "Come, you shall have five shillings for it." No reply. "Ten shillings then?" — "A guinea?" — "Two guineas?" "The whole world should not purchase it!" said he; and returned it to its greasy resting place.

NOTE 4.—page 10.

"The pensive willow weeps above the wave,"

This is not altogether poetical hyperbole. "The weeping willow, in addition to the pensive drooping appearance of its branches, weeps little drops of water which stand like fallen tears upon its leaves."

Hone's Every-day Book.

NOTE 5.—page 16.

"Took pity upon each, and blasted both!"

See the story of John Hewett and Mary Drew, in a letter from Gay to Mr. F., published in Pope's letters.

NOTE 6.—page 23.

"When heard in such a mood at such a time."

Secure that nought of evil could delight
To walk in such a spot on such a night.

Lara.

NOTE 7.—page 28.

"Then tremble! for the hour is near at hand," &c.

Shakespeare, who seems to have overlooked no accident even, of human feelings or human fate, appears, I think, to imply the same kind of presentiment of good, followed by evil, which I have en-

deavoured (perhaps indistinctly) to express here, when he makes Romeo say —

“ My bosom’s lord sits lightly on his throne,
And all this day an unaccustomed gladness
Lifts me above the earth with cheerful thoughts.”

It is immediately after this, that he receives the tidings of Juliet’s death.

Sir Walter Scott also — the Shakespeare of prose — has the following passage in *Guy Mannering*, which seems to prove that an idea somewhat similar to this is prevalent in Scotland : — “ I think,” said the old gardener to one of the maids, “ the gauger’s fie,” by which word the common people express those violent spirits which they think a presage of death.

NOTE 8.—page 36.

“ *Oh! had a stranger wrought me such a wrong.*”

For it is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour : for then I could have borne it.

Neither was it mine adversary that did magnify himself against me : for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him.

But it was even thou, my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend.

Psalm lv. Verses 12, 13, 14.

NOTE 9.—page 61,

“ *Lonely and monstrous lurks the bloated toad.*”

The natural history of that reptile affords many instances of its being found, not only in the hearts of trees, but in solid blocks of stone or marble.

NOTE 10.—page 78.

“ Nor like the Theban head,” &c.

The head of Memnon, which was fabled to utter forth harmonious sounds at the rising of the sun.

NOTE 11.—page 106.

*“ And kings, to whom the world has bowed,
Themselves have bowed to thee.”*

Vide 1 Esdras, chap. iv. ver. 12, and the following ones.

NOTE 12.—page 110.

“ For thee a conqueror lost the world.”

Mark Antony.

NOTE 13.—page 113.

“ An Askew ours !”

For an account of this admirable heroine, vide Burnet's History of the Reformation, and Rapin, folio edition, vol. ii. p. 845. She was put to death by Henry VIII., in the year 1546, for denying the real presence ; after being cruelly but fruitlessly put to the torture, in hopes of eliciting the names of some ladies of the court, who were supposed to maintain the same heretical principles ; but whom, with a constancy worthy of immortal honour, she resolutely refused to betray. Upon being asked by the Lord Mayor, during her examination, whether the priest cannot make the body of Christ ? she wittily replied, “ I have read that God made man, but that man can make God, I never yet read.”

NOTE 14.—page 115.

“ And sang the saint in heaven.”

See his ode “ To Mary in Heaven.”

NOTE 15.—page 116, verse 54, &c.

Not in the climes where I have late been straying,
Though beauty long hath there been matchless deemed,
Not in the visions to the mind pourtraying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dreamed,
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seemed,
Young Peri of the west! — *To Ianthe.*

NOTE 16.—page 122.

“ And feel — as only bards can feel.”

I dread thee, fate, relentless and severe!
With all a poet's, husband's, father's, fear!

BURNS.

NOTE 17.—page 145.

There is a striking resemblance between the subject of this little poem, and one by the Italian poet Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, which has been translated by Miss Agnes Strickland; though in the latter the *admonitions* are assigned to the painter instead of the lady. It is a remarkable, but perfectly fortuitous, coincidence; — as the *Likeness of Love* was written at least three years before the author had seen or heard of either the poem or translation alluded to.



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